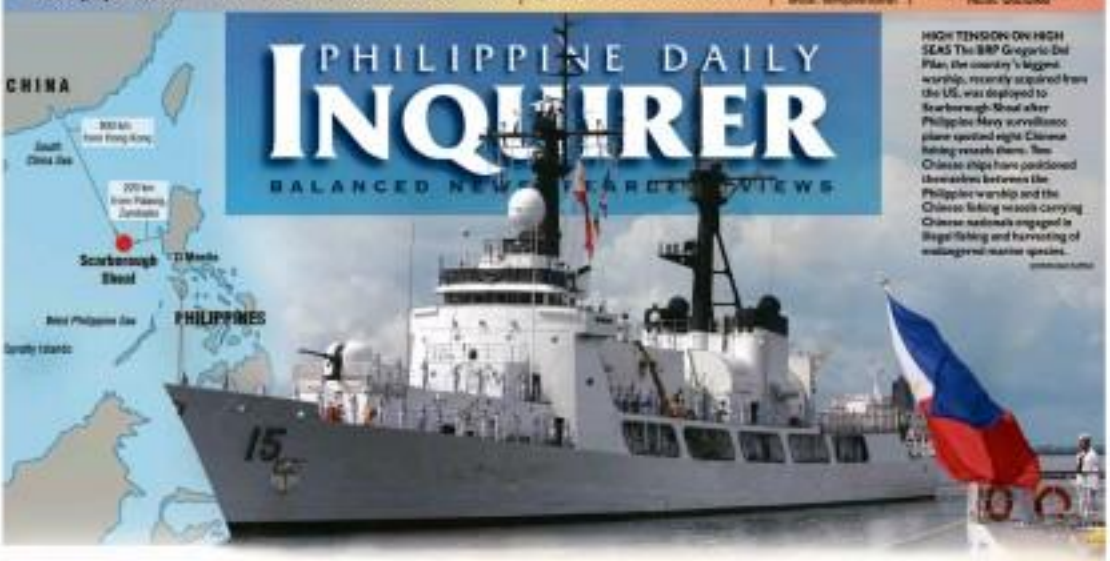
Thursday, April 12, 2012 ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 37 / No. 124 P18 | Mobile Alerts: Text INQ ON BREAKING to 4467 | www.inquirer.net Twitter: @inquirerdotnet

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS AT A TIME OF VIEWS



HIGH TENSION ON HIGH SEAS The BRP Gregorio Del Pilar, the country's biggest warship, recently acquired from the US, was deployed to Scarborough Shoal after Philippine Navy surveillance plane spotted eight Chinese fishing vessels there. Two Chinese ships have positioned themselves between the Philippine warship and the Chinese fishing vessels carrying Chinese nationals engaged in illegal fishing and harvesting of endangered marine species.

Standoff at Scarborough

Aceh's 8.6 quake triggers panic, tsunami alerts

BANDA ACEH—A massive earthquake struck off Indonesia's Sumatra island on Wednesday, triggering an Indian Ocean-wide tsunami alert and evacuation orders to clear people away from the coast.

The 8.6-magnitude quake struck 431 kilometers off the Indonesian city of Banda Aceh, the US Geological Survey said, and was followed by a major 8.2-magnitude aftershock.

Terrified residents poured into the streets of Banda Aceh, which was devastated by a 9.1-magnitude quake in 2004 that triggered an Indian Ocean tsunami, killing 220,000 people including 170,000 in Aceh province.

The latest tremor was felt as far

ACEH'S A10

P-Noy: Our sovereignty must prevail without violence

GOING ROGUE One of two Chinese surveillance ships that blocked the Philippine Navy from detaining the illegal Chinese fishermen. AUSTIN CELLERY/ DFA/AFP

GOTCHA! Filipino soldiers board a Chinese fishing vessel loaded with giant clam shells, corals and live sharks.

By Christine O. Avendaño and Tina G. Santos

PRESIDENT Aquino said yesterday he wanted a peaceful resolution of the ongoing standoff between a Philippine warship and two Chinese vessels in the Scarborough Shoal, but made it clear that the country's sovereignty over the area must prevail.

The President was told about the incident on Tuesday night and he promptly met Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and military officials, his spokesperson, Edwin Lacierda, said.

Speaking to reporters after he accepted an honorary doctorate from Centro Escolar University at Manila Hotel, Mr. Aquino expressed hopes officials in the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) would resolve the impasse in talks with their counterparts in Beijing.

The Philippines said the standoff began on Sunday when its Navy tried to detain Chinese boats fishing in its waters but were stopped by two Chinese surveillance craft. The Chinese Embassy accused the Philippine warship of harassing the fishermen and called for it to leave Chinese territory.

The President said that he had been in contact with Chinese Ambassador Ma Keqing and that yesterday he asked Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario to continue the talks

ETHERDOM A10

Binay chides LP officials for sowing intrigue

By Tina G. Santos
Christian V. Esguerra
and Cynthia D. Baluna

VICE PRESIDENT Jejomar Binay yesterday said he was not forming an alliance with former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as he slammed the "hypocrisy" of leaders of the ruling Liberal Party (LP) for their "desperate attempt" to link him to Arroyo.

Binay chided the LP officials for sowing intrigue between him and President Aquino. "They must have forgotten that I am part of the Cabinet and I support President Noynoy 100 percent," he said.

Binay recalled that he even had dinner with Mr. Aquino in Malacañang on Tuesday night and attended a meeting until 11 p.m. He said he did not feel any tension between him and the President.

"The United Nationalist Alliance (UNA) has no plans of forming an al-

BINAY | A11

P-Noy says he has no time to read GMA book

PRESIDENT Aquino wants to read former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's memoirs to see things from a totally different perspective.

But Mr. Aquino said the problems Arroyo left for him to solve would keep him from finding time to read her book.

"It would be good if [we could read about] things from [the perspective of] one who's quite different," Mr. Aquino said when asked yesterday to com-

PUNO | A15

PH has 3 hours to react after rocket launch

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

PHILIPPINE authorities have just three to four hours after North Korea launches its rocket to warn people in coastal communities in northeastern Luzon to stay clear of the rocket's projected path.

According to Maximo Sacro Jr., one of the founders of the Philippine Astronomical Society, it takes the booster three to four hours to fall in Philippine territory after it disengages from the rocket.

"[It's important that] we know the time of launch. That's the bottom line," Sacro told reporters during a briefing at National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) headquarters in Quezon City.

Sacro, a special consultant to the NDRRMC as a "rocket authority," said the rocket's first booster would fall within minutes from launch.

The second booster is expected to dis-

PH HAS 3 | A4

Joker wants coco farmers to get cash now

By Fernando del Mundo
Chief of Bureau

SEN. JOKER Arroyo yesterday called for the immediate cash distribution to coconut farmers of assets now estimated at more than P100 billion acquired using a coconut levy collected from them during the martial law years.

Arroyo's call is a statement to the legislative nerve amid moves by Aquino administration officials and lawmakers to set up a trust fund for coconut farmers out of the proceeds of the assets, principally sequestered shares of

JOKER A-10

NBN-ZTE CASE

GMA pleads not guilty 3 times

FORMER President Arroyo is flanked by husband Mike Arroyo (left) and her son Rep. Mikey Arroyo inside Sandiganbayan in Quezon City on Wednesday. Arroyo was arraigned for her role in the aborted $329-million NBN deal with China's ZTE Corp. in 2007.

By Leila B. Salaverria

DEFYING doctors' advice not to go out because she had shingles, former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo faced the Sandiganbayan yesterday and pleaded not guilty to corruption charges related to an overpriced deal with a Chinese telecommunications company in a second criminal case against her.

Arroyo was arrested last year on a separate charge of electoral fraud and has been since indicted in connection with a $329-million government contract with Chinese telecommunications giant ZTE Corp.

Her husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, and former Commission on Elections (Comelec) Chair Benjamin

GMA PLEADS | A11

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: Hazy and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with isolated thunderstorms and localized thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times mostly cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Iloilo	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Mostly Cloudy

Second FRONTPAGE

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6/49		TOUR DIGIT* (Tuesday)
1st draw	17 3	6 9 3 4
2nd draw	11 29	MEGA 6/45
3rd draw	12 18	28 29 32 41 43 44
SUPER 6/55*		P14,777,254.80
1st draw	6 2 7	6/55 GRAND LOTTO
2nd draw	1 2 9	4 6 17 29 39 45
3rd draw	1 4 9	P51,192,032.40

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'Napocor privatization a mistake'

Tañada wants gov't return to power generation as solution to Mindanao shortage

By Gil Cabacungan

ELEVEN years after the government absorbed P800 billion worth of debt with the privatization of the National Power Corp. (Napocor), a lawmaker yesterday said the government had made a mistake in ceding control of the country's power supply to private companies.

It's time the government returned to the business of power generation as a long-term solution to the power crisis, said Quezon Rep. Lorenzo Tañada III.

"It is about time that we realize that the insecurity of our power system is the result of a structural defect introduced by the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira), I believe that it was grave error for Epira, as envisioned and implemented, to have removed government role in power generation in a liberalized setting," said Tañada, who is the House deputy majority leader.

Tañada made the remarks ahead of the power summit scheduled to convene in Mindanao on Friday when Energy Secretary Jose Rene Almendras is expected to come under fire for his recent decision to allow a P14 per kilowatt hour (kWh) power rate hike in the region, with collective ordering directs cooperatives to buy additional power supply from private power plants.

Tañada said the dismantling of Napocor's power monopoly has inevitably led to "market failures" as seen in the prevailing power crisis in Mindanao where household and businesses have been forced to pay higher electricity rates because of the failure of government planners to foster the island's power supply despite warnings in early as two years ago.

"One aspect of it has to do with the inability of the private sector to meet the required capacity additions in a timely manner, another has to do with the private players overcoming conversations through consolidation of market power. Both have serious negative impact on supply security, affordability, and fairness of pricing," he said.

According to Tañada, Congress passed Epira in 2000 in the belief that fostering market competition in power generation would eventually benefit consumers in the form of lower prices. Full privatization of the state's power generation assets has been much delayed, however, with only 19 percent of the state generation Napocor's assets privatized by 2006.

He says believes that "the time is ripe" for government to re-enter the business of power generation.

'Gov't as player'

"To date, I do not mean a throwback to the former nationalized structure of generation. Instead, I envision a re-entry where government will be a player in generation alongside private corporations. This will give us the flexibility to respond to situations when markets fail, or when strategic public interest is not adequately served by the private sector," said Tañada.

He pointed out that the government's return to power generation would not require special legislation or even the grant of emergency powers to the Executive as Epira does not prohibit the government from participating in the liberalized generation sector outside of Napocor.

Tañada's remarks identifying a corporate vehicle to handle the government's re-entry into power generation, with the Agus and Pulangui power facilities as its starting assets, as well as the Caliraya-Botocan-Kalayaan (CBK) facility identified as a critical asset for the establishment of the Luzon grid.

Democrito Mendoza, president of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, yesterday expressed concern over Almendras' near-term solutions to the Mindanao power crisis in which electric cooperatives have been forced to buy expensive power from the Aboitiz Group's Therma Marine power barges, which he said would hurt the region's poor provinces.

He questioned why Almendras was so quick to nullify the electric cooperatives' earlier buying power from Therma Marine under their force majeure to "moderate its financial requirements" and lower its charges from P9.04 to P8 per kwh.

He warned the increase in power rates would rise up the region with the prohibitive tariff over its power supply from the cheaper hydropower plants would cause economic loss this year. With a become doing

P-Noy, Corona at it again

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE WAR of words between President Aquino and Chief Justice Renato Corona is back, less than a month before the resumption of Corona's impeachment trial at the Senate.

The President said yesterday he would just pray for the Chief Justice, scoffing at the latter's accusation from the latter as "ill-served from real life," thus breaking his word that the Palace would no longer be commenting on Corona so as not to divert attention from the issues at the trial.

Mr. Aquino struck back at Corona when he was asked to comment on the Chief Justice's allegations that the government had placed his home under a 24-hour surveillance, ordered the wiretapping of the cell phones of his family and an investigation of family members.

"Maybe the simple answer there is I will just pray for the Chief Justice," the President said, adding that Corona seemed to have been thinking about a lot of things lately.

He said Corona's accusations would seem good "when once it making us action film or a drama."

"That seemed ill-served from real life," he said.

But even before those comments were made during a chance interview at the Manila International Airport, Mr. Aquino earlier yesterday made a veiled attack against Corona in a speech at the Centro Escolar University where he was conferred an honorary degree.

Without mentioning Corona by name, Mr. Aquino launched into a lengthy criticism of the judiciary.

In the past years the justice system seemed to be the exclusive privilege of the few, that it seemed that such provision in the Constitution, there are words and letters but are not manipulated to the appeal of the magistrates and lawyers," he said.

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Comelec told to answer bid vs PCOS deal

By Marlon Ramos

THE SUPREME Court yesterday ordered the Commission on Elections (Comelec) to file its comment to unconditional petitions filed by several parties questioning the Comelec's purchase of P1.8 billion worth of voting machines that were used during the 2010 elections.

Justice Midas Marquez, the high court's administrator and spokesperson, said the SC's Second Sala directed the Comelec to file such in 10 days to comment on the motion filed by a group led by Davao City mobbishop Fernando Capalla.

In a text message to reporters, Marquez said two other petitions seeking to stop the Comelec's acquisition of some 82,000 precinct count optical scan (PCOS) machines would be taken up in the high court's en banc session on April 17.

The Comelec said it intends to use the voting machines it was purchasing from Smartmatic Corp. in the 2013 mid-term elections.

2010 glitches

Capalla was joined in the petition by Cesar Ali, former mayor of Marawi City and Mary Anne Stamos, former Quezon City representative.

Capalla et. al asked the high court to issue a temporary restraining order, arguing that Smartmatic and its local partner, Total Information Management Corp. (TIM), should have been made to account for the alleged glitches in the 2010 automated elections.

The group said the problems caused by the allegedly "defective" PCOS machines amounted to "millions of pesos and maybe even thousands/instead of votes."

"When [respondents] TIM should have been repentance/for these defects... Entrenched (cronyism) chose by favoring the purchase of these defective PCOS machines," they said.

Apart from the Capalla group, the Automated Election System (AES) Watch, led by former Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr., and the Initiative for Sovereignty (INSI) of Ms. Linda Montenegro have also filed their own pleadings.

In its 16-page petition for certiorari, the AES Watch said the contract was a "clear and patent violation" of the law on public bidding of government projects and contracts.

Manual polls won't be easy, says Comelec

By Desiree Caluza, Inquirer Northern Luzon and Jerome Aning

BAGUIO CITY...It will be very difficult to return to manual elections in the 2013 midterm elections if groups questioning the Commission on Election's plan to buy the automated counting machines is upheld by the courts, Comelec Chair Sixto Brillantes Jr. said yesterday.

Still, the poll body will accept other options to help it keep to its schedule to prepare for the 2013 elections, Brillantes told reporters here yesterday.

"Everything is possible but it is very difficult to go back to manual elections... We will not dream of going back to manual elections no matter what," he said.

Three petitions by various groups, including the Automated Election System (AES) Watch, urged the Supreme Court on Monday to invalidate a P1.8-billion supply contract with Smartmatic Corp. to purchase the automated voting machines that were used in the 2010 elections.

The complainant groups said the contract had violated bidding rules.

Brillantes arrived here yesterday to preside at a Comelec en banc session today, although the body will not tackle the supply deal involving the 80,000 precinct count optical scanners (PCOS), now that the issue has reached the courts.

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NOTICE TO ALL PROPERTY OWNERS, LOCATORS AND SUB-LESSEES IN CAMP JOHN HAY

- CAMP JOHN HAY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (CJHDEVCO) condemns illegal and unfair business practices. It has not nor has it ever engaged in any double sale, as alleged in a paid advertisement of BCDA.

- BCDA is accusing CJHDevCo of "double sale" on a Log Home BCDA received - and has been using! - as part of a compromise settlement following BCDA's breach of the basic Lease Agreement brought about by the 2003 Supreme Court decision nullifying the Camp John Hay Special Economic Zone benefits. Records will show that the Log Home that BCDA has been making an issue of (while using it) had never been sold to any party before it was given to BCDA.

- CJHDEVCO is current in its rental obligations to BCDA. We dispute the reference by BCDA to P2.9 billion rentals from 2003 to 2008 because **BCDA was in default** during this period. BCDA also failed its warranties of giving Special Economic Zone benefits to CJHDEVCO from 2003 to 2008 and its 30-day guaranty on issuance of all local and national permits for CJHDEVCO projects from 2008 onwards.

- BCDA cannot point the issue of non-issuance of permits to the HLURB as the HLURB has long held since 6 September 2000 by virtue of a Resolution of the HLURB Executive Committee that sale of leasehold rights over units in Camp John Hay is not subject to the jurisdiction of HLURB. CJHDEVCO therefore does not need permits to sell from the HLURB.

- In its paid advertisement dated 10 April 2012, BCDA incorrectly stated that the Lease Agreement of CJHDEVCO will end on October 18, 2021. THAT IS INCORRECT. CJHDEVCO's Lease Agreement is UP TO **OCTOBER 18, 2046.**

- All leasehold titles and contracts with CJHDEVCO to date are valid.

- CJHDEVCO challenges BCDA to adhere to the rule of law by laying its claims before the courts and Philippine Dispute Resolution Center instead of engaging in a smear campaign against CJHDEVCO and Mr. Bob Sobropeña. The actions of CJHDEVCO stand on solid grounds. CJHDEVCO calls on BCDA to meet the issues head-to-head before the courts and arbitration body in accordance with existing agreements.

Let the public be assured that CJHDEVCO will exert all legal measures to protect owners, lessors, sub-lessees of the Manor Hotel, Suites Hotel, Log Homes, Cottages and other properties in Camp John Hay, Baguio City.

Lifting of deployment ban to Jordan eyed

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE PHILIPPINES will send a delegation to Jordan next month to negotiate the eventual lifting of the deployment ban on Filipino domestic workers, a ranking labor official said yesterday.

Labor Undersecretary Danilo Cruz said Amman had asked Manila to send a delegation to finalize not the standard employment contract for Filipino household service workers (HSWs), which would include, among other things, a $500 monthly basic wage.

In August, Labor Secretary Rodolfo Bakita said Jordanian Labor Minister Maher Al Wahed signed an agreement in Amman regulating the recruitment of domestic workers.

A deployment ban was imposed in 2006 after many cases of abuse of contracts and visa of dozens were uncovered.

Bakita said she hoped the agreement would help stop the flow of undocumented Filipinos made into Jordan.

If successful, the agreement with Jordan could also serve as an example for other countries in the Middle East that are reluctant to agree on giving Filipinos made a $400 basic salary.

"The team could also go to Lebanon after it wraps up its work in Amman. We've also signed protocols with Lebanon," Cruz said.

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Cryoablation treatment creates miracle on malignant tumor as big as a fist

Mr. Glenn, an old Australian farmer was diagnosed with advanced lung cancer. His CT scan was not at all encouraging because the size of his tumor could already be likened to a ball of an adult female. Worse, it was still growing and the volume was also increasing.

The old man was also suffering from arrhythmia and other diseases hence the traditional thoracotomy would simply not work. With the gravity of his condition, the main task to be addressed was the removal of his tumor as soon as possible. The medical staff of Guangzhou Medem Cancer Hospital proposed to subject the patient to Cryoablation treatment, a more advanced procedure with good therapeutic effect. This treatment was also recommended by our Cryoablation expert of Guangzhou Medem Cancer Hospital, Mr. Liu Yuanfeng, explained that if the patient would undergo the traditional thoracotomy, he would not be able to pass through the anesthetic procedure. But by opening he would, still, it would create major trauma, and a risky situation such as failure to complete the tumor resection. "Traditional surgery has high risk, not to mention the elderly, even the younger patients will not select the traditional surgery," he added.

Having learned these things and after a thorough reflection, Mr. Glenn and his family finally decided that he would undergo the Cryoablation treatment as suggested by the doctors of Guangzhou Medem Cancer Hospital under the help of Professor Liu Yuanfeng. Cryoablation treatment and Radio-particle seed implantation were done on Mr. Glenn. It was successful and Mr. Glenn and his family were pleasantly surprised when the CT scan showed that the tumor tissues on his lung was in the state of necrosis. Only a few days later, Mr. Glenn has fully recovered and was discharged.

Many may not be too familiar with Cryoablation and Radio-particle seed implantation treatment and perhaps a bit wonder why. It has truly good curative to eradicate tumor tissues. As described by Mr. Liu Yuanfeng, Cryoablation and Radio-particle seed implantation find are extremely low temperature to freeze the tumor to death then the radio-particle seeds are implanted to previous radiotherapy on a new distance to make up for the deficiencies of Cryoablation treatment.

The tumor tissues are densely "frozen to death" and at this point the human body has a strong absorption and self-clearing ability relative to the necrotic tumor cells. After a short period of one month, or long period of six months, the necrotic tumor tissues are absorbed by the body and will no longer affect the health of the patient.

Cryoablation, a minimal invasive treatment is unique because it uses extremely low temperature of argon and helium gas as curative means. After a local anesthesia is given, a small incision is made on the skin in order to pierce the thin tubes inside directly into the tumor and initiate the gas. This is done to lower the temperature to -140°C to -150°C and to a few seconds of rapidly freeze the tumor and tumor part of the tissues swelling to dehydration and cracking. The freezing process leads to the rotten liver of the capillary, shrinkdown and blocks the blood flow, thrombosis, thus paving the way to ischemic necrosis of the tumor. Moreover, after the freezing and thawing of the tumor, tumor cells crack and then dissolve. The immune system of the patient is then mobilized in order to enhance the treatment results.

If you have experience such matters concerning cancer treatments and has inquiries kindly call 8231555, 09175263616, 09234800004 or visit Unit A-1002 6788 Ayala Avenue Makati City. Website: www.asiancancer.com

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Metro folk to pay 33¢ more per kWh

CUSTOMERS of Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), the country's biggest power distributor, will pay an additional 33 centavos per kilowatt-hour (kWh) in its generation charge this April.

The increase raised to P5.66 per kWh the generation charge, which accounts for about 56 percent of a household's monthly bill.

Meralco yesterday said the increase was largely due to the rising demand for electricity and reliance on oil-fired power plants because of climbing temperatures.

"With the onset of summer, peak demand for power in the Luzon grid went by more than 300 megawatts, along with the reduced availability of hydroelectric plants due to the effect of the recent expansive oil-based power plants to meet power requirements," Meralco said in a statement.

The utility said the cost of power it was buying from the wholesale electricity spot market (WESM) and independent power producers (IPPs) went up last month.

The power outlay until the end of power it purchased from the WESM, which contributed 7 percent of Meralco's total power requirements in March, was higher by P2.46 per kWh than the level in February.

Mechanical trouble

The cost of power from its IPPs similarly rose by 24 centavos per kWh, due mainly to mechanical trouble, which affected production at the Quezon Power coal plant.

Meralco got 46 percent of its electricity requirements last month from four IPPs—Quezon Power Philippines Ltd.'s coal-fed facility; the 1,000-megawatt Sta. Rita, the 585-MW San Lorenzo natural gas-fired plants and 300 Cabanatuan 600-MW coal facility in Batangas. The Sta. Rita and San Lorenzo plants are owned by the Lopez-led First Gen Holdings.

Although WESM and IPP rates went up, the cost of power that Meralco purchased from the state-run National Power Corp. (Napocor) fell by 9 centavos per kWh.

Napocor supplied 40 percent of Meralco's total requirements last month.

Meralco reiterated that the cost of power sold by the generating companies would illustrate monthly based on actual metered factors such as the actual energy and demand patterns and the foreign exchange rate.

The generation charge goes to the different generating companies and the WESM.

Considering that electricity consumption rises during the summer months, Meralco encouraged its customers to take energy conservation measures.

On top of the increase in generation charge for April, Meralco will start collecting this month the P1.3 billion worth of local franchise taxes it had paid between 1999 and 2005.

The amounts to be recovered from each area over the next five years will range from about 1 centavo to 4 centavos per kWh, depending on the amount of local franchise taxes remitted to local governments.

The amount shall be reflected in the monthly power bill as "tax recovery adjustment cost."

Not all areas, however, will be slapped with this additional charge. At least 17 local governments in the province of Bulacan, Batangas, Cavite, Rizal and Laguna, in the cities of San Jose del Monte, Batangas, San Pedro, Tagaytay, Santa, Mandaluyong, Makati, Quezon, Caloocan, Pasay, Las Piñas, Manila, Calamba and Pasig.

The Energy Regulatory Commission said that local franchise taxes levied by local governments and subsequently remitted by Meralco were legitimate expenses, which the law allows to be recovered from the customers, as these charges are considered a pass-through cost.

—Roy R. Rosio

Nokor starts injecting fuel into rocket for launch

PYONGYANG—Impoverished North Korea rejected international protests over its planned long-range rocket launch and said on Wednesday that it was injecting fuel "as we speak," meaning it could blast off as early as today.

If all goes to plan, the launch, which North Korea's neighbors and the West say is a disguised ballistic missile test, will take a three-stage rocket over a sea separating the Korean peninsula from China before releasing a satellite into orbit rather than three years over western near the Philippines.

Regional powers also worry it could be the prelude to another nuclear test, a program the hermit state set in 2009.

Weather conditions

"We don't really care about the opinions from the outside. This is related in order to develop our national economy," said Park Chang-ho, head of the satellite control center at the Korean Committee of Space Technology.

Once the refueling has been completed, the North Korean will have to inject chemicals into the rocket and these chemicals cause corrosion, which means the firing could come on Thursday at the start of a five-day window announced already by Pyongyang.

Weather conditions on the Korean peninsula also appear to favor a launch on Thursday or Saturday, according to meteorological reports from Japanese television.

"The likelihood of a launch (on Thursday) is the greatest," said Yoon Tae-Yeon, a professor of engineering at South Korea's Yonsei University and an expert on rocket technology.

The launch of the Unha-3 rocket, which South Korea says will merely put a weather satellite into space, breaches UN sanctions imposed to prevent Pyongyang from developing a missile that could carry a nuclear warhead.

'Not a weapon' but ...

James Oberg, a former rocket scientist with the US space shuttle mission control who is in South Korea, said the rocket was not a weapon, but "99 percent of a weapon." Injecting more rocket fuel, although not routine, is the third long-range rocket test by North Korea. Is claims that its second succeeded in putting a satellite into orbit in 2009, although independent experts say it failed.

The Hermit Kingdom's ally China, which is expected to appoint Kim Jong-un as successor general of the Workers' Party of Korea, the top post held by his late father, Kim Jong-il, in April.

Park, briefing foreign journalists in the North Korean capital of Pyongyang, declined to comment on the launch date. "And as for the exact timing of the launch, it will be decided by my superiors," Park said.

Pyongyang, which maintains nuclear ally at war with the North after their 1950-1953 conflict ended with a truce rather than a peace treaty, warned Pyongyang it would deepen its isolation if it went ahead with the launch.

Security sources in Seoul, citing satellite images, said that South Korea, which walked out of "six-party" disarmament talks three years ago, is also preparing a third nuclear test following the launch, something it did in 2009 and a move found to trigger further condemnation and isolation.

South Korea holds parliamentary elections on Wednesday, although the ruling party does not appear to have been a major issue with voters more concerned about job security.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton insisted that history pointed to "additional provocations" from North Korea after the launch, an apparent reference to a nuclear test.

Additional provocation

"This launch will give credence to the view that North Korean leaders see improved relations with the outside world as a threat to their system," the top US diplomat told an audience in Annapolis, Maryland. "And recent history strongly suggests that additional provocations may follow."

She also called on China to do more to ensure regional stability.

China, North Korea's only major ally, on Sunday implored an elusive lecture and said it had "repeatedly expressed its concern and anxiety about the developments." —Reuters

PH has 3 hours to react after rocket launch

From page A1

engage about three to four minutes before, Bacio said.

As the rocket will be at a much higher altitude by this time, the second booster will be in a free fall and will take about three to four hours before it reaches to Philippine territory, he said.

Sea crash

Debris is projected to crash in open sea, but disaster officials have warned local governments in his county for contingencies, as the rocket could veer off its projected flight path and shower debris on land below.

"The first important thing we must know is what time [the rocket] was launched, and then what time [the first booster] fell in South Korea," Bacio said. Then, he said, authorities can estimate where the second booster will fall in the Philippines.

Engineers were pumping fuel into the rocket that was to carry a satellite into space, officials at the South Korean space agency's control-command center said yesterday during separate news briefings.

The power outlay until the end of power it purchased from the WESM, which contributed 7 percent of Meralco's total power requirements in March, was higher by P2.46 per kWh than the level in February.

The launch window opened at 7 a.m. (the time related story on this page.)

The NDRRMC said the Unha-3 rocket is similar to the Taepodong missile that North Korea is developing to carry nuclear warheads.

The long-range Taepodong-2 rocket, which failed in a test in 2006, is 31 meters long, 2.1 meters in diameter, has a range of 6,000 kilometers, a payload capacity of 650 kilograms, and launch weight of 61,000 kilograms.

The Unha-3 will be launched from North Korea's new Sohae Satellite Launching Station in North Pyongan Province, near the border with China. The rocket will follow a southward trajectory along an ocean corridor, to avoid Taiwan and the Philippines.

190 km east of Luzon

Unha-3's first stage is expected to separate and fall in the Sulu Sea less than 200 nautical miles in an area 190 kilometers east of Luzon.

Threatened by debris falling from the rocket are Cagayan Valley, Batanes Island, Camarines Norte and Catanduanes.

The NDRRMC said debris would fall in others areas in Luzon if the rocket veered off its projected path.

The agency urges residents of Bojeo, Gattaran and Santa Ana towns in Cagayan; Palanan, Ilagan, Cauayan, Santiago, Roxas, Echague and Jones in Isabela; Gamu, Aglipay, Diadi, Bayombong, Bambang and Dingalan in Aurora; Real, Infanta and General Nakar in Quezon; and Camarines Norte and Catanduanes Norte to stay indoors during the five-day window set by the launch.

The government's no-fly and no-sail zones in northeastern Luzon comes two days after this warning.

Affected vessels, ships and fishing boats are prohibited from flying or navigating in the area 190 nautical miles northeast of Santa Ana, Cagayan, up to 150 nautical miles east of Palanan land to Quezon.

"It is probable but highly unlikely that the rocket will hit land," Sucro said.

He cautioned that the falling booster will be about eight meters long and about two and a half meters in diameter.

"I think it won't disintegrate into pieces," he said, adding that the rocket was not expected to reach a very high altitude before the booster disengaged.

'Direct communication'

NDRRMC Executive Director Benito Ramos said the agency would set information on launch time and other important details from contacts in the United States, Japan and South Korea.

"We have direct communication," Ramos said.

The no-fly and no-sail zone is in effect from early morning until noon since North Korea has said 11 hours, which is between 6 a.m. and 11 a.m., Philippine time.

Ramos said the prohibition period could be extended depending on the actual time of the launch.

Earlier advice

Also yesterday, Cagayan Rep. Jack Enrile said his province area had been told to heed the government's precautionary advice to stay away from areas that debris may likely to fall in open water and not in populated areas.

"We have issued an appeal for them to inform authorities or the Bureau of Fire Protection if they see debris that is observed or found in their areas," Enrile said in a press statement.

"We have also been told that the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute of the Department of Science and Technology has prepared their equipment and personnel to handle the debris and to assist local government units that may be affected," Enrile said.

Enrile said, however, that the launch and tracking is not afraid of because it was still too early to tell whether the launch would be a success or a failure.

"North's Korea's rocket launch will likely have some negative implications on geopolitics in the Asia-Pacific region," he said.

"The success of this launch will send the message that North Korea can fire an armed missile anywhere in the region, and that will create some tensions," he said.

Emergency team

Disaster officials in the flood regions activated an emergency response team on Monday in preparation for the rocket launch.

Ruffy Alejandro, regional director of the Office of Civil Defense Bicol and Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (RDRRMC) chair, said the provinces of Camarines Norte and Catanduanes in Bicol were threatened by rocket debris.

Alejandro said the team...composed of military police, Coast Guard and the Bureau of Fire Protection personnel...was placed on high alert, ready to be deployed to sea or land to assist in the recovery of rocket debris if the falls in Camarines Norte and Catanduanes.

The RDRRMC also placed on high alert regional disaster agencies. Residents of communities in coastal areas or the eastern seaboard were advised to stay indoors on the day of the rocket launch.

Residents were also advised to report to the nearest authorities sightings of falling debris or suspicious-looking objects. They were warned not to touch any piece of debris, as it may be harmful.

In Catanduanes, the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council advised residents to "take a long precautionary" interval of staying indoors during the rocket launch.

"The stay-indoor policy would paralyze economic activity in our small province and the consequences would be devastating to itself," Gov. Joseph Cua said. With reports by from *Mar S. Arguelles* and *Fernan Dumon, Inquirer Southern Luzon; Gil Cabacungan; AP; and Inquirer Research*

Comelec: No plan to let poll fraud suspects off the hook

By Jeremy Aning and Marlon Ramos

THE COMMISSION on Elections (Comelec) yesterday denied it was about to drop electoral sabotage charges against two former provincial election supervisors accused of rigging the 2007 elections but the Department of Justice defended the plan.

"It's not true. I'm sure there's no resolution on that. We have a special en banc session tomorrow but that's not even on our agenda. It may just be a rumor," Comelec Chair Sixto Brillantes Jr. told reporters in an interview.

On Tuesday, the son of former Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. claimed that the Comelec was considering dropping charges against former election supervisors Yogi Martirizar of South Cotabato and Lilia Amano Radjeni of South Cotabato, who were set to be admitted as state witnesses. They argued that this would be irregular because the two were not the "least guilty" in the poll-cheating case.

But Brillantes did admit that the joint Department of Justice-Comelec panel prosecuting the case made such a recommendation "long ago." But he said the commission "has not yet taken that up."

"Maybe they (the Abalos camp) only heard it in the lower levels. The joint prosecution panel reports to us, and there's no such resolution dropping the case against Radjeni and Martirizar. There's no formal move [for the admission of a resolution]. The case against them should proceed. But as far as Comelec is concerned, this will be our decision. It (the dropping of the case) can't happen without passing through us," he added.

On the other hand, Justice Secretary Leila de Lima yesterday confirmed the government planned to utilize the two former election officials as state witnesses against Abalos and justified the possible dropping of charges against them.

The two are co-accused with the former Comelec chair, former president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, Maguindanao election supervisor Lintang Bedol and former Maguindanao governor Andal Ampatuan Sr. for rigging 2007 poll results in favor of the administration's senatorial line-up.

"Walking testers co-accused as state witnesses presupposes that they have to be discharged as accused. It goes hand in hand. You cannot be used as a state witness if you are not dropped as co-accused."

De Lima also took issue with Abalos' son, Mandaluyong Rep. Romero Abalos, who had argued that charges against the two could not be dropped because only the "least guilty" among the accused should be considered as state witnesses. The two, he had argued, were accused of election irregularities during the term of the elder Abalos and a case was later filed in court. The two were also facing for five years then emerged and pointed to Abalos as supposedly the one who ordered them to cheat.

Countered De Lima: "Maybe they (the Abalos camp) should read again the Rules of Court," she said. "The Rules of Court did not say that those that can be discharged as state witnesses are only those that are accused least guilty. The court readings... in 'those not appear to be the most guilty.'"

"You may not be the least guilty, but for us long as you are not the most guilty, you're still qualified as state witness," De Lima added.

She denied the charge of the young Abalos that the government was planning to drop charges against the two as part of the "persecution" of his 80-year-old father.

"I think that's the common reaction of those facing criminal charges," De Lima said in response. "Our mandate is to go after offenders of the law. It would be dereliction of duty if we will go easy on them."

"The least or, ex-penalty in this ad. transaction, is that we are going after the big fish because if they are accused, that's a strong document against corruption," she added.

She said it was "natural" for government prosecutors to be aggressive and accuser in pursuing cases against accused like the former Comelec chair.

"But that is not persecution at all. We are just... after accountability. They must be made to answer for their offenses," De Lima stressed.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday - April 12, 2012
Octave of Easter, Thursday

1st Reading: Acts 5:17-26

While he clung to Peter and John, all the people, struck with astonishment, came running to them in Solomon's Porch, as it was called. When Peter saw the people, he said to them,

"Fellow Israelites, why are you amazed at this? Why do you stare at us as if it was by some power or holiness of our own that we made this man walk? The God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus whom you handed over to death and denied before Pilate, when even Pilate had decided to release him. You rejected the Holy and Just One, and you insisted that a murderer be released to you. You killed the Master of life, but God raised him from the dead and we are witnesses to this. It is his Name, and faith in his Name, that has healed this man whom you can see and recognize. The faith that comes through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

"Yet I know that you acted out of ignorance, as did your leaders. God has fulfilled in this way what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer.

Repent, then, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out and the time of refreshment may come by the mercy of God, when he sends the Messiah appointed for you, Jesus. For he must remain in heaven until the time of the universal restoration which God spoke of long ago through his holy prophets.

Moses himself has said, 'The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall listen to him in all that he says to you. Whoever does not listen to that prophet is to be cut off from among his people.

In fact, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel onward, have announced the events of these days. You are the children of the prophets and heirs of the covenant that God gave to your ancestors when he said to Abraham: All the families of the earth will be blessed through your descendant. It is to you first that God sends his Servant; he raised him to life to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways.'

Gospel: Luke 24:35-48

The two disciples told what had happened on the road and how Jesus made himself known when he broke bread with them.

As they were so talking about this, Jesus himself stood in their midst. (And he said to them, "Peace to you.") In their panic and fright they thought they were seeing a ghost, but he said to them, "Why are you upset and why do such ideas cross your mind? Look at my hands and feet and see that it is myself. Touch me and see for yourselves: a ghost has no flesh and bones as I have." (As he said this, he showed his hands and feet.)

As they are this didn't they believe and were still astonished. So he said to them, "Have you anything to eat?" and they gave him a piece of broiled fish. He took it and ate it before them.

Then Jesus said to them, "Remember the words I spoke to you when I was still with you. Everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms had to be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.

And he went on, "You are what was written: the Messiah had to suffer and on the third day rise from the dead. Then repentance and forgiveness in his name would be proclaimed to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Now you shall be witnesses to this."

Reflection

What we have in today's reading is an example of how Christians should read the Scriptures. We have it with their connection. We reason out their facts and doubts and shortcomings... We talk their attention to what they had overlooked or misunderstood. Homily Hub: "Evangelize Me in the breaking of bread." This is a phrase that Luke repeats as if to make sure we notice it. Disciples in every century have continued to recognize him in "the breaking of bread."

Across the NATION

3 dead as bus bombed in N. Cotabato

Target is transportation firm that rejected extortion demands previously

COTABATO CITY—Suspected extortionists with links to terror groups bombed a bus in Carmen, North Cotabato, yesterday, killing three passengers and wounding five others, the military said.

The bomb went off on the bus as it was about to leave a terminal in Carmen, said Col. Leopoldo Galon, speaking for the Eastern Mindanao Command.

Among the five wounded were two children aged 5 and 11 years, he said.

He said extortion gangs have been suspected in previous attacks targeting bus companies in the region.

One gang identified as Al Khobar has been mentioned as sowing fears operating in Cotabato, but it was not clear if it was behind the bus bombings.

A bomb at the same terminal in 2010 killed one man and wounded two others, and a month before that, 18 passengers died in a bomb targeting the same bus company.

Col. Sergio Pino, head of the 7th Infantry Battalion based in Carmen, said the blast victims were bound for Cagayan de Oro on board a bus owned by the firm Rural Transit that came from Tacurong City.

Buses belonging to Rural Transit have been bombed in the past when the transport firm refused to heed extortion demands.

Galon said the bus was nearing the terminal past 10 a.m. when the blast occurred.

The dead were identified as passengers Rona Mae Canseng, 18; Eladio Hamplos, 18, and Reina Causing, 62.

The five wounded passengers were taken to Kabacan Medical Specialist, a small hospital in Kabacan town. Two of them were identified as Alan Hamplos and Hannah Israel Cones. Hamplos's 6-year-old son was also among the wounded.

No one has claimed responsibility for the blast, authorities initially blamed extortion groups operating in North Cotabato.

Supt. Rogelio Salinas, the North Cotabato police director, said the suspect was a man who boarded the bus between Kabacan and Carmen.

Salinas said the suspect disembarked before the bus reached the Carmen terminal.

"The climcouage bus drivers from picking up passengers in between bus terminals to avoid things like these," Inilinas said.

He said Rural Transit has been receiving extortion letters from unidentified groups.

Muslim rebels and criminal gangs are behind decadeslong unrest in some parts of Mindanao, home to minority Muslims.

Hundreds of US troops have been stationed in Mindanao as part of a program to train Filipino troops to fight militants.

Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

BOMB specialists from the military check the bombed bus in Carmen, North Cotabato, just a few meters from its terminal in the town.

Slain radio man's widow assails jail party for mayor

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—The widow of slain Aklan broadcaster Hubert "Bert" Mandas has asserted the alleged special treatment of a former Aklan town mayor detained in Cebu for the broadcaster's murder.

Aphrodite Mandas said a thorough investigation should be conducted on the alleged privileges that Alfredo Acenas, the former mayor of Lezo, Aklan, is receiving in jail.

Acenas is detained while on trial for the murder of Mandas.

"I hope that the court will look into this because we had the case transferred from Aklan to Cebu so he could not exert his power and influence on the case," Aphrodite told reporters in a telephone interview on Wednesday.

Acenas, who was tagged as the lone gunman in the November 2004 killing of Mandas, was seen on video last week allegedly holding a birthday party inside the office of the warden of the Cebu Provincial Detention and Rehabilitation Center.

Last month, he was also caught on video having lunch along with his jail guards and lawyer in a restaurant near the provincial capitol after attending a court hearing.

Aphrodite said she would consult state prosecutors handling the case on what action to take.

Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia has directed lawyers of the province to seek the Regional Trial Court to transfer Acenas's place of detention.

Rep. Jon Ingeniloria, the governor's spokesperson, said the transfer would "erase any doubt or suspicion that we are giving him (Acenas) special treatment."

Garcia had ordered the relief of Supt. Constante Bay, Cebu Provincial Jail warden, and assistant warden, after Acenas was allowed to have lunch outside jail.

The governor has also ordered the jail party investigated.

Sepahoodie confirmed that Napoleon Miranda, the acting provincial jail warden, had allowed relatives of Acenas to meet the former mayor and have meals with him at the warden's office.

"They partook of the food but it was not a party," Sepahoodie said.

He said visitation rights for all the prominent jail's 1,800 inmates have been suspended until the investigation is completed and those found liable punished.

Cops admit no big fish caught in Davao Sur 'Last Two' raids

DIGOS CITY—The big fish coddlers in what is supposedly a revitalized campaign against entrenched gambling lords, a police officer admitted yesterday.

Financiers of the numbers racket "Last Two," so called because it chooses its winning numbers based on the last two digits of winning numbers in the government game Lotto, are out of reach of police despite an order by Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo to step up the campaign against the criminal syndicate behind the racket.

Supt. Cesario Dalding, the operations officer of the Davao del Sur police, said police chiefs regularly report arrests or filing of charges against cohorts or bet collectors but nothing pertains to financiers.

"The reports pertain to arrested and charged cohorts or bet collectors only, but no big-time financiers have been charged in court," he said.

Dalding said chiefs of police have to meet every effort to bust down the game's financiers.

'The financiers could not be sued ... because the arrested ushers would not say who they are...'

Dalding said from January until today, 17 bet collectors have been charged in court.

"The financiers could not be sued based on the reports of the police chiefs because the arrested ushers would not say who they are," he said.

Dalding said chiefs of police have to meet every effort to bust down the game's financiers.

Financiers of illegal numbers games face prison terms of up to 20 years if convicted under the revised antigambling law.

Senior Insp. Francis Sarza, head of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) in Davao del Sur, said last year, police had identified a financier based in the city.

Sarza said Ordong Labajo, a resident of this city, had been charged in court but the case was dismissed for lack of evidence.

In Sta. Cruz town, a police colleague who requested anonymity said there is now a silent lull between police and some local officials because of the intensified campaign against Last Two.

Another source said police chiefs, or people close to them, were identified as among the financiers of the illegal numbers game.

Sta. Cruz Mayor Joel Roy Lopez admitted that his wife, Margie, was among those rumored to be involved in the illegal numbers game because of her friendship with a suspected financier.

But Lopez said his wife is clean. He said he suspected that the rumors stems his wife's involvement in Last Two even politically motivated.

"I even berated the police for arresting only the small ones. I even suspect that their failure to arrest the financiers had something to do with SOP [bribe]," he said. *Orlando Dinoy, Inquirer Mindanao*

Mall execs stop Baguio trees' transfer after court issues order

BAGUIO CITY—Executives of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) supervised the earth balling (uprooting) of trees in a shopping mall compound that have become the subjects of a 72-hour temporary environmental protection order (TEPO) issued by a local court, a DENR official said yesterday.

Eleanor Baguilat, the DENR Cordillera director, said 43 cedar trees and one pine tree were uprooted and transplanted to a different site in Loacan Hill by work crews of SM Investment Corp. in the premises of DENR personnel. The mall had identified 162 pine and cedar trees that would be earth balled to make way for an expansion project.

Baguilat said the earth balling started on Monday night.

But at 10:20 a.m. on Wednesday, SM received a letter from Regalian urging mall officials to stop the transfer of trees after Judge Dave Villanueva Jr. issued the TEPO.

The trees are being relocated to make way for an expanded mall facility, which environmental groups have been opposing since January.

On Wednesday afternoon, more than 3,000 church leaders, residents, students, artists and members of nongovernment organizations gathered outside the mall to protest the alleged defiance of the TEPO.

In his letter, Baguilat said he was urging the mall management to comply with the TEPO "without prejudice to whatever action your lawyers may take."

In a statement, SM said some of its executives assisted in Baguio as part [t]o its securities to exercise a copy of the Tepo. In compliance with the order, SM postponed the earth balling in Loacan Hill, the statement said.

Villanueva's order read: "What is being enjoined from taking place ... is the earthballing of trees, the earth balling of the trees, as well as the uprooting of the trees from the ground."

"It is of extreme urgency because once the trees are out, I don't know if any technology that will bring them back to life," Villanueva wrote in his order. *Maureen Calderon, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

In Quezon, towns start paving way for sanitary landfills

By Dallo T. Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—Local government units in Quezon have been trying to comply with a law that requires them to establish sanitary landfills, according to officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Ernie Vetus, the senior environmental management specialist and head of the DENR Environment Management Bureau in Quezon, said the towns of Mauban, Infanta and General Nakar are now operating sanitary landfills in compliance with the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 (Republic Act No. 9003).

The towns of Pagbilao and Gumaca have been issued environmental compliance certificates (ECC) to build sanitary landfills. The towns of Unisan, Plaridel and Sampaloc have applied for ECCs.

According to Vetus, 15 of the province's 39 municipalities have turned open dumps into "controlled waste dumps." Others, she said, "are now preparing the groundwork" for sanitary landfills.

Rueta Quinto, officer in charge of Lucena City solid waste management division, said the city government would soon operate a 2-hectare sanitary landfill near its controlled dump in Barangay Ibabang Mayao.

"Hopefully, we will start operating the sanitary landfill this year or early next year. We're now looking for funds," Quinto said.

Quezon, Infanta and Mauban have entered into a joint venture agreement to build a regional sanitary landfill in Barangay Kinabuhayan, Pagbilao—and this city are now equipped with local laws regulating the use of plastic.

DENR, she said, has issued a final notice in 2010 to at least 23 towns to comply with the law or face charges in court.

"If they continue to ignore our warning, we will be forced to file cases in court," Vetus said.

RA 9003 prohibits the use of open dumps and penalizes violators with a minimum fine of P300,000. Local officials face administrative charges for violations.

Local Government Secretary Jesse Robredo said only 5 to 10 percent of local government units nationwide are complying with RA 9003.

THE PARTLY controlled dump in Lucena City will soon be closed to pave way for the operation of a sanitary landfill.

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Ador Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Edralyn L. Benedicto

Rodeo festival rebuilds Masbate image

By Jonas Cabilao Soliva
Masbate City

THIS week Masbate becomes alive with the blasts of horses and bullwhips hurled into the air as the Rodeo Masbateño Festival pits cowboys and ranch hands from all over the country against each other and try to rebuild the "shattered" image of the island province.

Some 56 teams with 600 participants from places as far as Benguet, Bukidnon, Cagayan and Indian Kadazal provinces are participating in the rodeo events in this year's festival. For the first time, Masbate provinces sent their own cowboys and ranch hands to compete.

The contests are not limited to cowboys as all of the competitions have corresponding categories for women. There teams of 20 cowboys are representing Masbate, including teams composed of students from schools and colleges in the province.

Events, among others, include bull riding, cattle lassoing, cattle wrestling from horseback, cattle wrestling on foot, and load-carrying relay. Winners of the various events will be announced formally when the festival ends on Saturday.

Also, there is a fireworks show and trade fair during the entire duration of the festival which organizers claim is the largest and only sports festival in the country.

A grand parade of 42th horses was staged on Monday in Masbate City where most of the events are held.

MORE than 600 horses participated in the grand horse parade in the thoroughfares of Masbate City kicking off this year's Rodeo Masbateño Festival, touted to be the largest sports festival in the country.

Organizers said it is a reenactment of the Kaogat horse parade in Sta.

On Tuesday, 500 horse dancers representing 11 municipalities in the province performed a horse dance on city thoroughfares.

There on Wednesday, herds of 70 cattle were driven by trained cowboys and ranch hands on a 2.5-kilometer stretch of road.

The cattle drive intended to bring back the time when cattle were driven by foot from the different towns of Masbate for shipment to various parts of the country such as Batangas province.

To ensure the safety of residents and spectators, all houses and stores where the cattle drive will pass through were advised to close temporarily and watch from safe perches.

Once identified with feuding politicians, Rodeo Masbateño has been changing the image of the island province in recent years, said this year's organizers of the festival, which pays homage to the livestock industry in the southernmost province of Bicol.

"Once, it was divisive because the celebration is dependent on who was running the provincial government. There were times when it was not celebrated because of politics, especially when it would coincide with election period," said Jurge Manuel Gene, president of the Rodeo Masbateño Inc. (RMI), festival organizer and organizations of cattle raisers in Masbate.

In February last year, RMI decided on reorganize the festival and veer it away from politics.

"Masbate is known only for two things—political violence and rodeo. There is no other way to promote Masbate now to the outside world except through Rodeo Masbateño. We have to revive the festival or we will be associated always with political killings," said Gene.

Taking advantage of the influx of visitors wanting to experience the festival, organizers hope to promote tourism in Masbate and encourage investment in the province.

Masbate adopted the rodeo as it was popularized by American movies and books to boost its cattle industry and showcase its potential in 1992.

Staunch outburst by the provincial government traces modern rodeos to 19th century post-Civil War America, which saw the boom of the cattle industry and the transportation of livestock from the open ranges of the West to the more populated Eastern settlements.

The modern slang "rodeo," a term derived from the Spanish rodear meaning "to surround," serves as contests and exhibitions of skills derived from rounding up cattle.

Gov. Rizalina Seachon-Lanete said the title "Rodeo Capital of the Philippines should be kept by Masbate, recognizing the fact that similar rodeo events have sprouted everywhere in the country, especially in General Santos City.

"At stake, the provincial government is proposing to ask the Congress to pass a law declaring every second Saturday of April in Masbate, where Rodeo Masbateño Festival kicks off, as a nonworking holiday," she said.

Agriculture Secretary Proceso Alcala represented President Aquino in this year's event, which was also attended by Senator Antonio Trillanes IV and Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia.

THE COOL shade from huge trees lines both sides of the road provides comfort to weary motorists passing the short stretch of the Malvar-Nasugbu diversion road in Lucena City.

Tree lines rising along Quezon highway

By Dollie T. Mallari Jr.
Lucena City

SEVEN YEARS from now, motorists may be treated to a panorama of hardwood and fruit-bearing trees while traveling along the Maharlika Highway in Quezon province.

"With rows of mara, acacia and fruit-bearing trees now planted on both sides of the Maharlika Highway, traveling will soon be a breeze and relaxing," Macay Calayag, community affairs officer of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro), said last week.

Tree stretch of the highway is about 110 kilometers from the Quezon-Laguna boundary in Tiaong town to Calauag town in the Quezon-Bicol boundary.

Launched in November 2010, the provincial government's tree-planting program, dubbed "Plant and Grow One Million Trees Securing Quezon's Future," has already surpassed its target. Calayag said 1,300,000 trees had already been planted throughout the province.

Project partners are taking care of ensuring the growth of the trees.

To prevent the destruction of trees as a result of road-widening activities, Calayag said he would again meet with officials of the Department of Public Works and Highways. He said how newly planted seedlings along the Tiaong bypass road were destroyed because of the road project.

On March 8, the Kalipunan ng Lipiig Pilipino (Kalipi) Quezon chapter led by Anna Vil lavicencio, wife of Gov. David Suarez, marked International Women's Day with a provincewide tree-planting activity. Some 300 seedlings were given by the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office to all women groups there in Tiaong town which secured their own seedlings.

Women employees of the provincial government went to a sloping area of Mt. Banahaw in Dolores town to plant 1,700 hardwood seedlings in four villages.

Kalipi members readily took part in the project could also be a source of livelihood for the local women folk. Kalipi is a national federation of women's associations formed by the Department of Social Welfare and Development in partnership with local government units.

Hot spring capital braces for traffic

By Marice Cinco
Calamba City, Laguna

THE VOLUME of summer vacationers in the private and public resorts here has begun to pick up, causing a heavy traffic in parts of the major thoroughfares in this city.

Mylene Rosin, radio operator of the Laguna Traffic Management Office (LTMO), said the traffic on the national road, particularly in the villages of Pansol and Bucal where most resorts are located, is expected to remain heavy until the end of summer.

"Traffic is slow Mondays through Thursdays but heavier on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays," Dennis said.

The slow traffic in the area started during the Holy Week break, signaling the start of the summer peak season in this city.

Rosin said the traffic on the national road's southbound lane is heavier in the morning while traffic on the northbound lane tightens from 4 p.m. to around 11 p.m.

For tomorrow, the normally 15-20 minute travel time from Splash Mountain Resort in Los Baños (near in Halang intersection in this city (about five kilometers), takes 45 minutes during the peak season.

Halang is a major road connection here that provides an alternate route for the private vehicles bound to Manila.

Except for Halang, there is no other route available for travel, or bonded to Los Baños and the remaining parts of Laguna province, but the national road.

"The (heavy) traffic is really because of the volume of vacationers," said city police chief Supt. Joel Pereira.

Rosin and Sally dela Cruz, the village chief of Pansol, said there are around 800 private resorts and 20 public resorts in Calamba City, which is also tagged the resort capital of Laguna.

A private resort accepts up to 30 guests while a private pool caters to around 1,000 people. "Last night, we already ran out of rooms where to refer those tourists because almost all resorts were already full [of guests]," Dela Cruz said in a phone interview on Monday.

Local officials here, however, said they have everything set in place for the summer season. Derrida said since April 2, the Oplan Samvac (Summer Vacation) has been activated to provide road assistance to motorists.

Oplan Samvac is a yearly campaign of the police, city government, and civic organizations to deploy more traffic enforcers and emergency response teams. Police-like patrols are also deployed to do a nightly patrol in the resort towns.

In Pansol, Dela Cruz said they are conducting a daily deworming drive to help the resort owners tidy up the place visited by tourists.

"The traffic may be a little hectic, but we can assure the tourists of the peace and order and cleanliness in the area," she said.

THIS summer, vacationers visit private and public resorts in Calamba City thus congesting the road leading to the resorts.

Standoff at Scarborough; P-Noy upholds PH sovereignty

From page A1

with like "so that our position on this issue would be made clear."

"What is important here is that we take care of our sovereignty. We cannot give [Scarborough Shoal] away and we cannot depend anybody but ourselves," Mr. Aquino said. Still, he said the relationship is not supposed to be emphasized to the military now "to ensure no violence will happen here."

The President said that "had the situation not been tense, maybe we will feel it 'funny'" as he explained China had flung barricades to the entrance that Philippine officials said them it had constructed by its intrusion in the Shoal to the Philippines.

He said this was what Chinese officials told the Philippine charge d'affaires when Beijing summoned him over the incident.

Seeking diplomatic solution

Mr. Aquino insisted Scarborough Shoal is "our sovereign territory" and that Philippine officials had recently asked Beijing why it had "installed itself in our waters."

"But their answer to our charge d'affaires—and the worst part is, they turned the tables on us—China is claiming Scarborough Shoal, that it was its inalienable territory and even protested the entry of our ships there. In its effect, it's like we are both using the same thing from a different point of view," he said.

The President stressed that the Philippines and China are signatories to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which specifies each country's exclusive economic zones.

"So—me still mostly bearish if there will be an eruption of violence there. So we are hoping [for a peaceful resolution]," the Chief Executive said.

Del Rosario said he and the Chinese ambassador reaffirmed their governments' positions that the Scarborough Shoal was part of their own country's territory and neither was ready to stand down.

"Both of us also stressed in a spirit of friendship and cooperation that tensions should not be increased, that we should work on keeping tensions down."

PH to defend shoal

The South China Sea, which Manila calls the West Philippine Sea, is home to a myriad of competing territorial claims, most notably the Spratly Islands south of the chain. The islands are claimed by China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan. The barren islands, reefs and coral outcrops are believed to be rich in oil and gas and the overlapping claims have long been touted as Asia's next flashpoint for armed conflict.

Both China and the Philippines feared their standoff yesterday. Del Rosario said he warned China's ambassador that "if the Philippines is challenged, we are prepared to assert our sovereignty."

A Philippine Navy surveillance plane on Sunday spotted eight Chinese fishing vessels anchored in a lagoon at Scarborough, 124 nmi said. That prompted the military to deploy its largest warship, the BRP Gregorio del Pilar, which was recently acquired from the United States.

Illegal fishing

On Tuesday, Filipino sailors from the warship boarded the Chinese vessels for an inspection, discovering large amounts of illegally collected coral, giant clams and the shark's fin from the Shoal, Del Rosario said the Chinese fishermen had been "engaged in illegal fishing and harvesting of endangered marine species."

Two Chinese maritime surveillance ships later approached and positioned themselves between the Philippine warship and the Chinese fishing vessels "thus preventing the arrests of the erring Chinese fishermen," the Philippine statement said.

The Chinese Embassy said the fishing boats had taken shelter from a storm in the lagoon, and that Philippine troops including some who were armed were inside the lagoon and harassed the fishermen.

"Two Chinese marine surveillance ships arrived on the scene following the duties of safeguarding Chinese maritime rights and interests," it said in a statement.

It said the ships had "in an intergal part of the Chinese territory, and the women around it the traditional fishing area for Chinese fishermen."

'Law is in our favor'

Lt. Col. Anthony Alcantara, chief of the Northern Luzon Command, said the Philippine Coast Guard would eventually take over from the Philippine Navy to "tone down" and handle the matter as a maritime police case.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson supported the moves on the islands. "We should enforce our own laws. No matter how weak we are as a nation compared to China, the law is in our favor," he told reporters.

Last year, the Philippines accused Chinese vessels of intruding into other parts of what it considers Philippine territory. China has repeatedly dismissed the claims, saying Beijing has indisputable sovereignty over those areas on historical grounds.

The United States has insisted it takes no sides in the territorial disputes but says it should be allowed to operate in the region.

The disputes over the Spratlys have settled into an uneasy standoff since the last major clash involving China and Vietnam killed more than 74 Vietnamese sailors in 1988. With reports from Bong E. Pamis-Baguio, Michael Lim Ubac and AP

IN THE KNOW

THE SCARBOROUGH Shoal (Philippine name: Panatag Shoal; Chinese name: Huangyan Dao) is a triangle-shaped chain of reefs and islands surrounding a lagoon covering an area of 150 square kilometers.

The closest Philippine land mass is Pulong in Zambales province, 220 km away. It is also 592 km from Manila and more than 800 km southeast of Hong Kong.

Several islands in Scarborough are 3 meters high, while many of the reefs are below water at high tide. Several reefs also dot Scarborough, the most prominent of which is Bajo de Masinloc, 1.8 meters above water at high tide.

Not part of Spratlys

Abundant marine resources in the area attract fishermen from both China and the Philippines, which both claim it as part of their territory.

It is however not part of the Spratly Islands whose China, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam are embroiled in a separate territorial quarrel.

In 1961, the Philippine Navy conducted an iron ore survey on the south of Scarborough lagoon.

In 1990, China and the Philippines signed a code of conduct pledging to solve their disputes by peaceful means.

Hundreds of ships pass through the vicinity of Scarborough. A 1999 bulletin by the University of Durham International Boundaries Research Unit said Japan used the route to transport 80 percent of its petroleum from the Middle East.

On June 6, 2011, following rates of tension between China and the Philippines over territorial claims, the provincial board of Zambales endorsed the claim of Masinloc Mayor Jun Omar Genorga Shoal to "strengthen the claim of the Philippines on that area." Inquirer Research

Sources: National Mapping and Resource Information Authority; Shoal brought Panatag Shoal to the limelight; Global Security; Bulletin; Inquirer Archives

Aceh's 8.6 quake triggers panic, tsunami alerts

From page A1

shield as Thailand, where downpours in the capital Bangkok swamped. India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Burma all issued alerts or evacuation orders.

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono downplayed the threat of a tsunami and said on his Twitter feed there no reports of major damage or casualties, but that the country remained on alert. But an after shock of almost the same magnitude, but deep than the first quake, hit soon after he finished speaking.

Professor, speaking after the first quake, said there were no signs of a tsunami.

"There is no tsunami threat although we are on alert," he said at a joint news conference in Aceh's with visiting Interior Minister Gamawan Fauzi. "The situation is under control, there's a little bit of panic but people can go to higher ground," Yudhoyono said.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii issued tsunami warnings for the entire Indian Ocean after the quakes struck. It said a tsunami watch was in effect for Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka, Australia, Burma, Thailand, the Maldives and other Indian Ocean islands, Malaysia, Pakistan, Somalia, Oman, Iran, Bangladesh, Kenya, South Africa and Singapore.

ACEH PRESS: people run in panic shortly after a powerful earthquake hit the western coast of Sumatra in Banda Aceh on Wednesday that prompted an Indian Ocean-wide tsunami alert. AFP

Small waves

But hours later, the threat appeared to have passed.

US monitors who issued the tsunami watch said it appeared to have only generated small waves.

Victor Sardina, a geophysicist with the US Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii, told AFP the tsunami was "not anywhere near" as large as the devastating waves that struck Aceh in 2004 and injured not yet.

He said the waves measured a mere 35 centimeters near Padang, Indonesia, but would swell to as high as a meter near Sri Lanka, adding that US scientists were still carefully monitoring the situation.

Authorities in Indonesia and there were reports of sea levels rising off Aceh, but by less than a meter.

But authorities in India's Andaman and Nicobar islands to the north of where the quakes struck, said waves of up to 3.0 meters could hit there.

In Banda Aceh, panicked residents grabbed their families and raced through crowded streets.

India's Tsunami Warning Centre issued a warning for parts of the eastern Andaman and Nicobar islands. In Tamil Nadu in southern India, police cautioned all the beach and urged local speakers to warn people to leave the area.

Satheesh Shenoi, director of the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services, said the disturbance of a tsunami was diminishing.

"There are no indications of tsunami wave the instruments are not showing any sea level change," he said.

Strike-slip quake

Roger Musson, seismologist at the British geological survey who also studied Sumatra's fault lines, says the trembler was a strike-slip quake, not a thrust quake. In a strike-slip quake, the earth masses horizontally rather than vertically and doesn't displace large vertical areas of water.

"When I first saw this was an 8.7 near Sumatra, I was fearing the worst," he said, noting one of the initial reported magnitudes for the quake. "But as soon as I discovered what type of earthquake it was, then I felt a lot better."

Strong aftershocks

Hours after the terrible, people were still standing outside their homes and offices, afraid to go back inside.

There were several strong aftershocks.

"I was in the shower on the fifth floor of my hotel," Hartberg Bergenhenan told El Shinta radio from the city of Medan. "We all ran out ... We're all standing outside now."

He said one guest was injured when he jumped from the window of his room.

Individual countries, including Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and India, issued their own warnings to coastal and populous areas the country to act. That province were ordered to move to higher ground.

Authorities shut down the international airport in the Thai beach resort province of Phuket.

Panicked residents rang out across Phuket which was one of the areas hit most in the 2004 tsunami.

Joker wants coco farmers to get cash now, not be incidental beneficiaries

From page A1

stroke to San Miguel Corp. (SMC) awaiting final resolution of an appeal in the Supreme Court on ownership issues.

The usufructs of the trust fund are being discussed separately in a multi-agency task force created by President Aquino and in talks before the House of Representatives and the Senate, the latter a government assessing the ailing coconut industry and issuing the laws of some 25 million impoverished Filipinos dependent on it.

"While no one can question the need to revive the coconut industry, the recent government policy is questionable in relation to the original farmers who were mandatorily levied during the martial law years—referred to as the asset beneficiaries," Arroyo said.

Incidental beneficiaries

"There is no pronouncement from the government that the farmers would be cash recipients of the asset decision. They would be incidental beneficiaries when the coconut industry is revived," he said.

"The farmers putted with hard-earned cash, but they would not be given cash in return; they would be given benefits in-kind, tools, seedlings, coal is facilities, etc. The irony of it all is that the principal beneficiaries, the government and the industry, had not contributed to the coco levy fund.

"Why does were the farmers made to wait for 25 years, since Edsa, if they would be made to work all over again? They have grown old since they started during martial law paying the levy 25 years ago," Arroyo said.

"After 25 years of waiting, will the farmers survive to receive the monies mandatorily levied on them for the levy fund during martial law?" he asked. "The prospects are obscure and their wait will remain."

Questionable record

In a phone interview, Arroyo expressed doubts on the government's ability to oversee a rehabilitation program for the farmers, citing its record in the aim of Pres. Benigno and Filomena dos Reis. He said Chel presents of the sale—some P52 billion— were supposed to benefit soldiers. Others benefited from the sale of the military camps, not soldiers," he said.

Arroyo quoted the Jan. 24 decision of the Supreme Court that the unrelated 24 percent of San Miguel shares "are declared owned by the government to be used only for the benefit of all coconut farmers and for the development of the coconut industry" which is awarded by falling batwatts as a result of aging trees and the impact of climate change.

"The government will thereby hold—in trust P60 billion or thereabouts, the calculated proceeds therefrom, to be used only (1) for the benefit of all coconut farmers and (2) for the development of the coconut industry," he short. it cannot be used for any other purpose," he said.

"The government's reaction is to declare that it would rehabilitate the coconut industry, the second-mentioned beneficiary (or, for the high court's ruling, but allow it unjust to the benefits for the original beneficiaries (investment/investitura)," he said.

He said that the usurufructs levies collected by the firstmand Marcos regime from the farmers between 1972 and 1982 were the original monies that led to the creation of the United Coconut Planters Bank (UCPB), the Coconut Industry Investment Fund (CIIF), and resulted finally in the acquisition of 47 percent of shares of stocks in San Miguel.

Arroyo said the levy cases were originally pursued by the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG), "because of its ill-gotten character."

Biggest scare ever

PCGG has said that it had so far recovered some P92 billion in ill-gotten wealth since the ouster of Marcos in 1986 during the People Power Revolution.

The SMC shares were acquired in 1983 for P2 billion in a sweetheart scheme, among them the plant of the controlled press under martial law. It was handed by lawyers of businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco in Accra, then stuffed by some legal eagles who would later be elected senators, and used funds deposited in UCPB from the levy...described by reform activists as nothing more than a "racket" and the biggest "scam" ever to be foisted on the nation. Cojuangco, Peru, once supported Marcos with a major contribution to his presidential campaign in 2010, was then president of UCPB.

The shares were sequestered after the ouster of Marcos while the PCGG pursued investigations on the allegations that they were part of the illegally acquired assets of the dictator and his cronies.

In April last year, the Supreme Court ruled that 26 percent of the SMC stocks—P94.8 million worth—were the property of the United Coconut Planters Bank (UCPB), the San Miguel Corp. (SMC) and Philippine Investment Management Inc. (Philmico).

The Philippine Coconut Producers Federation, or Cocofed, has applauded the court's Jan. 24 ruling on the 24 percent SMC shares acquired under the CIIF program in the complex scheme involving 11 holding companies. Cocofed is claiming the blue on behalf of 1 million registered farmers. Originally 25 percent, the portfolio was whittled down by San Miguel's acquisition with the entry of the Japanese brewer Kirin.

The 24 percent portfolio consist of more than 700 million shares. This package was reserved to from common to preferred shares in 1971 one share—in a deal approved by the Supreme Court in 2009 at a great loss to the farmers, given that at some point in SMC share touched as high as P189. Dividends on this package had yielded P8.8 billion as of last January.

Also reserved 4 percent blue of SMC shares owned by former SMC boss Andres Soriano—127.8 million common shares worth P31 billion at P127.40 per share and including stock dividends—has been converted into treasury warrants and is likewise under sequestration.

Fears of land raids

Military farmers groups have demanded that Mr. Aquino issue an executive order diverting the P92B in release levy fund assets deposited in UCPB, but Malacañang officials said that the matter, held in escrow, could not be freed until the court issues a final ruling on the Cocofed appeal.

Farmers groups have expressed fears that the levy funds would be used to fund the faltering Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, particularly an asking price of P70 billion as "just compensation" for the distribution of Hacienda Luisita. On Nov. 22, the Supreme Court unanimously declared to distribute the sugar plantation owned by the family of President Aquino.

However, Agrarian Reform Secretary Virgilio "Ver" de los Reyes disassured the claims. "It's not the fund for purposes other than its intended objectives is to disperse thousands of coconut farmers, from whom this fund was derived, and from rightful owners," he said in a statement.

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, in a hearing last December, expressed fears that cronies Congress moves to pass urgently a bill setting up the trust fund for the farmers, the assets would be dissipated. The UCPB was also criticized for issuing questionable loans to San Miguel. The bank is now under a P20 billion government rehabilitation program. With a report from BY Burgonio

7,000 summer jobs for poor kids

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE PRIVATE sector is offering nearly 7,000 summer jobs for students and out-of-school youth this year to help them pay for their education, Labor Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz said yesterday.

Baldoz said private companies and educational institutions have made available a total of 6,932 jobs this summer under the Department of Labor and Employment's Special Program for the Employment of Students (SPES).

"Many companies now recognize the very positive impact of the SPES, so they are willing to partner with us and sponsor students and out-of-school youth who will work for them on a short-term basis," Baldoz said.

She said Isuzu Technology Philippines Inc., Mead Westvaco, Goldilocks Bakeshop, Kimpo Manufacturing Services Providers, Inc., and Maybank Philippines had 2,891 available summer jobs.

SPES beneficiaries receive salaries not less than the prevailing minimum wage in the region where they will be employed.

A partnership bonded by a shared passion – to give every Filipino quality and affordable nutrition

Forty years have passed since the first can of Alaska Evaporated Filled Milk, in collaboration with FrieslandCampina, was purchased to nourish the Filipinos. But somehow, the passion to give quality nutrition has never stopped burning.

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Royal FrieslandCampina is the leading dairy company in Netherlands. It is the 5th largest in the world. Today, it operates in 25 countries and supplies every hundred with its products.

To Alaska Milk, this partnership presents limitless possibilities when it comes to giving quality nutrition. It affords Alaska Milk to compete globally through the possible distribution of Alaska Milk products in territories outside the Philippines.

It also offers learning through exchanges of best manufacturing and marketing practices, technology, and talents as well. This partnership is expected to elevate food and security awareness in milk processing in the Philippines.

"We expect this historical agreement to propel Alaska Milk to its next stage of growth and the products developed by FrieslandCampina will strengthen our position in all dairy categories. The intended integration will provide Alaska Milk with access to an international dairy company. It is a testament to our aspiration to bring our business and products regionally," said Wilfred Steven Uytengsu, President and Chief Executive Officer of Alaska Milk Corporation.

Alaska Milk and FrieslandCampina are both committed to nourishing 100 million Filipinos, sharing the same passion of providing consumers with affordable and world-class products.

Forty years ago, Alaska Milk devoted itself to providing quality and affordable nutrition to Filipinos. Today, it remains true and is further reinforced by this renewed partnership. Alaska Milk Corporation and FrieslandCampina remain a team with one passion - the passion to give quality and affordable nutrition at every stage of life, for every Filipino.

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OPINION

Even after 100 years

EDITORIAL

THE TITANIC is the flavor of the month. It remains an arresting story even after 100 years and even without James Cameron's blockbuster 1997 movie, which ranks the memorial cruise that started last Saturday quite underwhelmable. Indeed, if certain people are willing to fall in line for a chance to pay an enormous sum for a swing through outer space, why not a lesser amount (5,995 pounds or, in local currency, about P406,808) to retrace the Titanic's east and only voyage from the time it set sail from Southampton in England on its way to New York until it reached that point in the east Atlantic where it slammed into an iceberg and eventually sank four kilometers to the ocean floor? The MS Balmoral is smaller and slower, but what makes the memorial cruise especially resonant is that its passengers include relatives of the approximately 700 survivors of the tragedy. Think of the historic moments being imagined and relived, think of the thrill in savoring climate so reclusive it's made (perhaps gone from that Edwardian era, say "Long Way to Tipperary" and "Moonlight Bay," or the occasional American sing) or of the illusion of cocoon in the enclosure of monotonous sky, calm sea and icy temperature they elements of that night of April 14, 1912, when the luxury liner met its doom).

There were at least 2,200 passengers and crew in the Titanic, one of the "Olympic Class" ships built in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and reported to be the biggest, fastest and most luxurious in its day. Here is how BBC narrates the sinking: At 11:40 p.m. the lookout sounded the alarm and phoned the bridge: "Iceberg right ahead!" But the warning came too late. Less than 40 seconds later the Titanic struck the iceberg, tearing holes along the side of the hull. After inspection, the chief naval architect, Thomas Andrews, told Capt. Edward Smith that the ship was certain to sink. Five of the six watertight compartments at the front of the hull were swiftly flooding, and the ship was designed to stay afloat with only four compartments flooded. At past 2 a.m. of April 15, the Titanic was lying on the ocean floor off the coast of Newfoundland. As many as 1,517 lost their lives.

Now the New York Times cites two new studies showing that "rare statues of nature" played major roles in the world's most famous maritime disaster. The first, by researchers from Trent State University-San Marcos and Sky & Telescope magazine, says Earth's nearness to the sun and moon (not seen then) in more than 1,000 years) produced record high tides that sent icebergs into the North Atlantic shipping lanes. The second, by British historian Tim Maltin, says the icy waters created conditions for an unusual type of mirage that hid the icebergs from the Titanic's lookouts and also confused a passing ship, the Californian, and delayed crucial rescue efforts for hours.

But beyond these exciting developments, the story of the Titanic remains gripping because it pivots on class conflict even without Cameron's tale of aristocratic flame (played by a plutopish Ross Winslet when she was still a universe away from "Revolutionary Road") and her declared lover Jack (Leonardo DiCaprio frisky bordering on overwrought). The real pair's stolen was of course not to be, with only Rose rescued and Jack perishing in the frigid ocean, the salutary of their bittersweet liaison being that never the upper deck and steerage shall meet. (There are metaphors galore, so that it would not be too much of a stretch to be reminded of national hero Jose Rizal's "Noli Me Tangere," with its own upper and lower decks.) The Titanic's actual passengers were listed as jewelries, stockbrokers, bankmasters and property developers (including John Jacob Astor and his wife), among others, in first class; and blacksmiths, gardeners, "general" and "farm" laborers, housekeepers, etc. in third class. "Personal servants" of the first class passengers were listed as adjuncts of their masters. Interestingly, the divide was not so much in that there were second-class passengers composed of miners, merchants, musicians, engineers, civil servants and persons "of independent means," suggesting a budding middle class leaving a bastion of the old world and seeking better conditions in the young and brash United States.

That the mighty Titanic, which was touted to be unsinkable, gave up the ghost in its maiden voyage was a prelude to the end of empire. But it continues to be an object of fascination, providing lessons even a century after its destruction.

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What's wrong with our politics?

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

THE INQUIRER editorial yesterday got it right: "Same old, same old," referring to the familiar names that are expected to adorn the 2013 presidential slate of the newly registered United Nacionalist Alliance (UNA)—Unlike the notables Loren Legarda, Francis Escudero, Cynthia Villar, Alan Cayetano, Jackie Prince Roille, Gringo Honasan, JV Ejercito, Joey de Venecia, Jamby Madrigal, Ernesto Maceda, etc. But, it must be said, to their credit, that the ruling coalition's list cannot be so different.

Our dominant political parties simply do not choose candidates on the basis of elected constituencies. They look at what aspirants can offer in resources, backdoors, roads offs, and popularity. The main idea is to win, not to govern or to change a society according to a vision. One parties have little use for a steady set of leaders nurtured from their youth in party beliefs and principles. Woe is why the ones who rule our country are the same people who entered the shows family interest and/or social ambition.

Every now and then, a nation might be lucky to have someone appear, through the old system who doesn't think like the rest. He or she might be gifted with a charisma and a bold and clear vision of the nation's future. But this one individual may not have the perseverance and the organizing ability required of anyone who is called upon to blaze a new path. This person has to gather a critical mass of like-minded leaders around a common program. Together, they must reach out to the masses and get them to change the way they think and act.

This is how many thinking young leaders with solid ideals have all too often found themselves sucked into the same system they seek to shake up. They find themselves entering into compromises with those who control the system in the hope of using its resources to raise a new breed of leaders. It is a gamble that seldom yields satisfying results. The ideals that fired these young visionaries are often conveniently set aside if not forgotten, the real generation of leaders they succeed are falsified by conventional politics along the way.

The talent scouts of traditional politics never sleep. They are the first to spot political stars on the rise, the icons of the youth, and the idols of the poor. They put them in touch with the interests and shakers of business, the media, and the grizzled impresarios of the political system. Public relations outfits subject them to a make-over, arrange radio and TV guestings for them, and plant their names in every survey of potential candidates. That is how the system reproduces itself.

This part of the story tells us how the system recruits new leaders who will do its bidding, but it doesn't tell us how it gets them elected in supposedly free elections. That part takes us into an examination of the political culture in which most of our people are raised because of poverty. This culture of patronage preys upon the dependence and vulnerability of ordinary people, offering them security in an uncertain world.

I have often wondered why our people keep electing public men who either know little about governance or too much about the private uses of government power, or both. The answer that keeps ringing in my ears does not come from some grand political theory but from the people themselves. "Mahusay" (generous), "marunong kumisa" (approachable), "malapit sa mahihirap" (pro-poor), "magaling" (intelligent), "matapang" (brave)—these are the most common words one hears when Filipino voters talk about the politicians they like. They all proceed from the standpoint of the subjugated in a deeply hierarchical society.

In the classical world of the Greeks, "politics" meant the activity of free men. They were free to participate in the collective life of the "polis" (city), or to stay away from it. Relieved of economic necessity and household chores, these men interacted with one another as equals. They of course brought with them into the public sphere the concerns of their respective households. But what bound each one of them to the others was the equality of the community itself. This was possible only where there was substantive equality among them, rather than merely formal guarantees of the right to participate.

While the Athenian model of direct democracy is no longer plausible or practical in the modern world, the fundamental principles it exemplified are undiminished in their significance. They remind us that where great inequality among citizens exists, it is impossible for politics to function as an instrument of the common good. It is bound to be misused as a tool of private ends and persons. And this is exactly what has happened to politics in our society: it has become the plaything of the few who make decisions that shape the lives of the rest that are shackled to the basic economic need of keeping body and soul together.

The state of affairs however cannot last forever. Even slaves and the serfs' years to free themselves, and assume at later they learn how to do this. The old order (seemingly) have-to-find itself by force as well as by ideology. I personally think we have already come to the limit of the legitimate uses of force, as we may note from the fact that we have one of the largest private security contingents in the world. What remains is the illusion of an inclusive political system that is renewed by elections. But this gain harder to sell every election year, simply because the staged political parties, saddled by the "same-old, same-old" characters, have become incapable of generating new ideas. At no other time is the birth of new political forces more awaited.

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David and Goliath

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IT'S LOOKING like a battle between David and Goliath. So says Juan Ponce Enrile about the looming fight between the government-backed Liberal Party and Jojo Binay and Joseph Estrada's coalition in next year's elections.

The coalition is called the United Nationalist Alliance and Silly itself as the only techie. Proof of its savvy being that its prospective senatorial candidates come from the most disparate, even conflicting, political camps: Koko Pimentel, Miguel Zubiri, Miles Magsaysay, JV Ejercito, Juan Ponce "Jacko" Enrile Jr., Joey de Venecia, Ernesto Maceda, Gregorio Honasan, Chiz Escudero, Loren Legarda, Alan Peter Cayetano, Jamby Madrigal, and Ms. Lourdes Nancy Binay.

Enrile sees UNA as David. That is because the LP has the resources of government behind it. "They hold the government, the money, the bureaucracy." But who knows, he says, "David might win."

I agree. David might win. But I disagree: David won't be UNA.

UNA is the David to the Goliath here, its candidates being more well known and name recall being a critical factor in voter preferences. But that's a giant that might just end up being killed by a sling shot. Binay's own experience in the last election supports us.

Binay's victory by razor's thinness despite the latter's Goliath-like lead because he managed to associate himself with principle. He rightly saw that Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was a colossal error in the elections (which was what led him to Erap's false glow as deadeye dare to fight), and turned the negative barometer of Noynoy's votes that he had been cast to anyone to the core. While painting Binay as having been pro-Arroyo in the last, it didn't hurt that he also teamed the pictures of himself alongside Cory, reminding voters of his Tarlac roots, and pushing to their the idea that he was a closer kin of Cory's than Noynoy was.

None of that is here. Principle is the last thing the guilt bag of characters thrown together in the UNA "senatoriables" suggests. Politics may be the art of addition, but not all additions add up. Some additions subtract, or at least bring the cost to zero, the barriers negating each other. UNA might pass off its cobbling as representing the politics of using but for many voters it can only hint of the politics of opportunism.

At the very least that is so because it includes people who have distinguished themselves only by their ability to submerge their own parties, for switching positions apart from affiliations. It's bad enough that we are a country that has no real political party, except for the Communist Party and Ang Kapatiran, a real political party being one that is bigger than its members, that commands allegiance on the basis of political beliefs rather than mere political advantages. It's worse that this draws in some political butterflies of the truly flattery sort, people who put on and off conventions, or what they pass off as so, like they wear clothes.

The most interesting delight in this is Koko Pimentel's quandary finding himself under the same roof as the person who made him a senator outside the Senate for four years, who is his bff. In the country, lightning does not only strike twice in the same place, it often does.

Sorry Pimentel presaged his self-plight He lost in the 1995 election because of what he called dagdag-bawas, specifically accusing Enrile of employing it against him, and brought the case to court. Three years later, he found himself in Enrile's company in the senatorial slate that Erap fielded. Erap being unstoppable at the time, Pimentel won. But he never recovered the stamina he had when he was fighting the fight against dagdag-bawas.

Bff Koko remains the movie? Abangan. But one thing is clear: Some debtors can be in-to-ers and some victims but not can be debtors.

At the very most, what all this proposes is more unity for unity's sake. It doesn't stand for anything other than that dubious goal. In fact, not all unities are good, some unities are bad. Not all unities are a boon, some unities are a bane.

The sounds very strong echoes of the theme the Marcoses keep banging on each time they try to get their favorite pastoral buried in the Libingan ng mga Bayani, the Bongbong put it at one point, P-Noy's creating a wonderful opportunity to reconcile former enemies, to unite the country.

Why so? The point of unity is to unite with the right parties, not the wrong ones. The point of unity is to unite with the oppressed, not with their oppressors. The point of unity is to unite the people, not their enemies.

Along with increasing political butterflies, UNA brings together people who represent the regimes that have made life inordinately unpleasant for most Filipinos. Those are the Marcos, Ejkjc, and Arroyo regimes. I don't know why the voters, or indeed the citizens themselves, should be elated at the thought that these unities will finally find a voice under one umbrella. Threatened would be more like it.

The likely result of all this will be to drive a wedge between the LP and the rest of the voters on a collision course. Indeed, the likely result of all this would be to drive into small relief, not unlike the last elections, an ideological divide, between past and present, between the forces of reversion and reform, between evil and good. But then the LP itself has not signaled itself as the leading light on P-Noy's effort to fight corruption...But stats has so far been non-remarkable—but the constant threats the party to that side. Is at least makes LP smell like roses. Why shouldn't it capitalize on something that is being offered to it on a silver platter? Image is important, and it matters.

So, yes, David might very well be left standing over Goliath after the smoke clears. Question is:

Who's the David and who's the Goliath?

Aquino camp faking letters to the editor

OUTLOOK

Rigoberto Tiglao

BOY CONTESTED with mainstream media outpolled. As in stunts, President Aquino's camp has been faking letters to the editor to vilify those critical of this arrogant and reckless administration.

Mr. Aquino's PR operatives have hijacked young people's Facebook names and fake identities and addresses to use as authors of those spurious letters. These bogus e-mail addresses are mostly Yahoo or Hotmail addresses, as those services enable their users (\$20 yearly for Yahoo Plus) to use so-called "disposable e-mail addresses" which conceal the senders' identities.

I won't belabor my argument, just consider the facts.

A letter to the editor was published in this paper April 3 maligning me. The letter—purported to be written by one Mayri Chloe Quinol—was well-written and even used erudite, uncommon terms as "Luzonese."

A check of Mr. Aquino's operatives in this case, Quinol has a very active Facebook account, which shows her to be a teen-aged high-schooler from Ramon Hills National High School. Her postings there, mostly in Filipino, are about stuff young girls have: Justin Bieber, Twilight, the Nobel Lit??? "call, I found the meaning of my name!"

There was no response to attempts at communicating with the purported writer at the e-mail address cbrat@ymail.com that I gave to this paper. Mr. Aquino's propagandists don't understand. It's jarred this young girl's Facebook identity and merited a fake e-mail address to spread their lies through the letters-to-editor section of this newspaper.

Then suspicious publishers and PR spinmeisters have been calling fake letters in the editor pages of newspapers around this country to get readers' feedback. A twist has even been coined in 1980 to describe the phenomena: "astroturfing," derived from the idea of the plastic turf called Astroturf replacing real grass (i.e., grassroots support).

But since it is an attack on a newspaper/columnist who

Titanic: 'A Night to Remember'

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

WHEN WE were kids and there were good movies showing in the city, our parents would take us to watch these movies with them and they would explain to us what those were all about, after so even during the showing. We got a good dose of historical stories—Pres. Woodrow Wilson, gladiators and Bible stories mostly. One of the movies that still sticks in my mind is "A Night to Remember," which was about the sinking of the Titanic which on its maiden voyage from Southampton, England to New York. The movie was in glorious black and white.

In a day or so, it will be the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic. It sank on April 14-15, 1912, somewhere in the North Atlantic and it wasn't until the 1980s that its remains were found and explored with the use of high tech instrumentation. Documentary Channel is showing a documentary on the Titanic's discovery with no less than "Titanic" (1997) movie director James Cameron's new underwater clips of the great wounder resting in the deep. A Titanic exposition is also showing in the ship-was built) to now a sold-out tourist attraction.

Some years ago, director Cameron did something similar, the "James Cameron's Expedition: Titanic," a two-hour documentary on the ship-was underwater clips of the remains of Titanic. But it's ship that was the "embodiment of Hitler's hope ego." I watched it and was so moved I have seven-a sixteen pays on it. So, when I was a kid I also got to watch the war movie, "Sink the Bismarck!" (Charles Bell's immortal words.)

What I still remember of "A Night to Remember" (even before watching portions of it on YouTube) was someone playing the violin even while the luxury ship, with 2,200 on board, was sinking, and the brave captain. I remember my dad whispering with certainty that the violinist must-be brave. But the captain will go down with the ship, that that is-how it is. Well, it's not that way anymore these days. Ship captains are sometimes the first to abandon ship.

On YouTube I searched for that violin-scene that

stuck in my childhood memory and I found not one violinist playing but several musicians playing different instruments—a violin, a cello, flutes, while the passengers were lining up for lifeboats or lapping straight into the icy waters. Maybe I should watch the whole thing again, because-what I remember is the captain, alone in his den, playing the violin in the last moments. Or did my still imagination create its own cinematic scene?

A look on YouTube shows that I either vaguely guess "A Night to Remember" the highest film rank. The write-up, "Harrowing, brilliantly directed docudrama detailing the sinking of the luxury liner Titanic. Distinguished British cast underplays admirably, creating tension and pathos even though the outcome is never in doubt. Based on the best seller by Walter Lord." The cast includes Kenneth More, David MacCallum, Laurence Naismith, Honor Blackman, Jill Dixon and Alec McCowen. The director is Roy Ward Baker.

In you-see further the 1997 blockbuster "Titanic" starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet and with the Celine Dion soundtrack, there was "A Night to Remember."

Written and published a bestselling book which was published in 1955, the movies on that tragic night at sea might have been mostly fiction and with few true-to-life accounts. Lord's book was based on his interviews with 63 (of the 705 survivors). The book also lists the crew and passengers in their respective order. It is said that there were more survivors from the higher decks (first class) than from the lower decks.

What did the band players really play while the ship was going down? Lord writes: "The legend is, of course, that the band went down playing 'Nearer my God to Thee.' Many survivors still insist this was so, and there is no reason to doubt their sincerity. Others maintain the band played only ragtime. One man says he clearly remembers the band is to last moments, and they were not playing at all. In this matter of conflicting evidence, Senior Wireless Operator Harold Bride's story comes how much sat. He was a trained observer, meticulously accurate, and relevant to the last. He clearly recalled that, as the final Deck dipped under, the band was playing the Episcopal hymn 'Autumn.'"

In "A Night to Remember" the band plays "Nearer My God to Thee," but not the familiar tune we hear in funerals. In the movie, musicians on life-boats hear-heard on the water as they sailed away and waited for rescue to come. It was a heart-wrenching moment.

In his book's intro, Lord describes the Titanic's last moments:

"From the boats, people could be seen clinging to the Titanic like little swarms of bees. The great and the humble, the rich and the poor, all were huddled together in the desperate despite and the stern rose high as The Titanic's bow buried in a jumble of falling musicians and instruments. The lights were out, flashed on again, went out for good. A single last explosion echoed through the still night air.

"The Titanic was now gone pendulous, her three dripping propellers glistening even in the dark, wet. Out in the boats, they could hardly believe their eyes. Six were two hours they had watched, hoping against hope, as the Titanic sank lower and lower. Now, in the space of a few minutes and gone, receding lights, they knew the end was near ... but nobody dreamed it would be like this—the unearthly din, the black hull hanging at 90 degrees, the Christmas-card backdrop of brilliant stars."

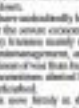
The "unbelievable" problem was, "Once, now up the volume—if "My Heart Will Go On." Did your prepare, it is 2012 and you can grow something...as black and white or in technicolor?

Send feedback to cmyo@hotmail.com or ceres.doyo@yahoo.com

Iran's nuclear grass eaters

WORLD VIEW

Shlomo Ben Ami



MADRID—AFTER long years of failed international efforts to contain Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons, the question today is no longer whether the West can prevent the nuclearization of Iran's military arsenal, but whether the Islamic regime collapses first. Unfortunately, if it does not, the only option for stopping Iran is war—and war it is very bad option.

Publication of intelligence data which assessing whether the sanctions now imposed on Iran will force it to surrender its nuclear program. In 1981, Pakistani Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto infamously declared that if India, its sworn enemy, went nuclear, his country would "eat grass or even go hungry" to acquire its own nuclear bomb of its own. Today, Pakistan, a near-failed state on the verge of disintegration, possesses more nuclear warheads than India.

Iran's theocratic regime, immersed in a momentous struggle for survival against what is arguably an unholy alliance of Israel, the American "Great Satan," and a surrounding Arab world that abhors its hegemonic ambitions, will not surrender its nuclear ambitions easily. Indeed, nuclear weapons appear to be the regime's only real means to self-preservation.

The failure of the Iranian revolutions taught us that supporting the revolutionaries is one way to prevent it. Iran tried that, and failed. The ultimate irritable fall of Iran's closest ally in the region, the Saudi regime in Syria, only adds to the regime's perceived sensitivities—and makes developing a nuclear capability seems all the more necessary for its survival.

Iran's leaders might be ready to let their people "eat grass and even go hungry" for the sake of their nuclear ambitions, but Iran's organized middle class, one hopes, will not submit so meek-dogmatic. Iran's middle class has been growing in size for years, and certainly began well before the West became serious about imposing economic and financial sanctions. Indeed, the popular revolts in Tunisia and Egypt were directly inspired by Iran's Green Movement, which emerged during the massive post-election protests in 2009, before succumbing to a brutal government crackdown.

The sanctions against Iran have undoubtedly hit its target, but the truth is that the entire economic hardships suffered by ordinary Iranians mainly reflect the regime's economic mismanagement, and the widespread fear that the fission of wars from both Israel and the United States, sometimes alerted by Iran's own war rhetoric, has surfaced.

Indeed, Iran's economy is now firmly in the grip of a vast panic. When a national currency loses 50 percent of its value in a matter of weeks, economic collapse is at hand. Businessmen find it impossible to use the currency for domestic transactions, because inflation is spiraling out of control. Consequently, panics, mass unemployment, and the rise of small and mid-size agricultural businesses prohibitive for a middle class severely hit by unemployment.

Iran's backward economy, a third of which is controlled by the Revolutionary Guard, is simply incapable of offering job opportunities to Iran's growing numbers of university graduates—the main argument of society that toppled the Shah. The problem has become increasingly acute, because 60 percent of Iran's population was born after 1979. Moreover, rapid population growth and huge gold economic policy have made Iran excessively dependent on food imports.

Yet, however crippling the effect of economic sanctions may be, they will not bring the regime to an end to its nuclear program. The most for which one can hope is that the sanctions enhance the chances of regime change by reawakening popular protest, thereby triggering an Iranian version of the Arab spring.

This might be wishful thinking, however. And, even if social unrest does erupt, repression might succeed again.

But an attack by either Israel or the United States on Iran's nuclear program would be a calamitous mistake, or, as Meir Dagan, a former chief of Israel's Mossad intelligence service, put it, "the stupidest idea" possible. So it is to be hoped that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's war rhetoric and vulgar manipulation of the memory of the Holocaust are nothing more than bluster. Israel's military establishment is aware of the Israeli's economic problem that he has done nothing to resolve.

Also, one cannot rule out a scenario in which nothing—diplomacy, sanctions, or the push for a regime change—works. In that case, one should not underestimate the persuasive efforts of Israel's Holocaust complex. What led Israel to war in 1967 was not a sound assessment of Egypt's intentions to attack, but fear of a second Shoah.

An attack on Iran might, however, produce precisely the effect that Netanyahu seeks to avoid. Israel's global diplomatic position would be untenable, perhaps more robustly than ever, the sanctions a nuclear weapons-free zone in the Middle East, and thus address Israel's nuclear capabilities, as well as the Palestinian problem—issues that Netanyahu has worked hard to ignore.

But if the Iranian crisis is finally taken, and, as its aftermath, the international community finds once again to justify the world's most dysfunctional region, the Middle East would devolve into an utterly chaos far more dangerous than the threat of an Iranian bomb.

Project Syndicate

Shlomo Ben Ami, a former Israeli foreign minister, now serves as vice president of the Toledo International Center for Peace. He is the author of "Scars of Wars, Wounds of Peace: The Israeli-Arab Tragedy."

A real political party

COMMENTARY

Jose V. Abueva

WE GAINED our independence in 1946, ended the Marcos dictatorship and regained our democracy through the Edsa Revolt in 1986, and formally restored our democracy under the 1987 Constitution. But for many years since Independence Day and 24 years after Edsa, what have we to show?

As a nation, we have made some gains and progress since 1946, but our socioeconomic development has not kept pace with our rapid population growth, with a population close to 100 million. Currently, we rank as

COMMENTARY

Jose V. Abueva

the 12th most populous nation in the world, and we remain a developing country.

Our political development is marked by:

• Continued dominance of dynasties in our political and economic life.

• Meanwhile poverty and growing disparity between the haves and the have-nots, and restricted growth of the middle class or "the backbone of our democracy."

• A "soft state" showing signs of a "failing state," weak rule of law, endemic corruption, abuse of authority, continuing rebellion, extrajudicial killings, criminality, unchecked rapid population growth, environmental degradation, and human insecurity.

• Obsolete and dysfunctional democratic institutions that restrict the meaningful participation of citizens in their governance—in elections, in the three branches of government, and in local governments.

• A national government suffering from executive supremacy, of powers and jurisdiction that are ill-defined among the three branches, making it difficult to develop modern political parties that are principled, program-oriented, and accountable to the people.

• Concentration of power and funding in our highly-centralized government based on "imperial Manila" at the expense of our people in the thirty and neglected provinces and regions.

And in our country to hell further behind its once progressive Asian neighbors, many of our youth face a dark future, and many more will have to seek employment abroad.

Change and reforms

Our basic political problems are our political system, institutions and until serving leaders, not the Filipinos as a people. Our structural and institutional problems are the result of many of our undemocratic political backwardness. Among these are disunity and integrity, good governance, and accountability of our political leaders and civil servants are inadequate, and possibilities exist for citizens who are poor and insecure to become active stakeholders in our democracy.

To build a citizens' political party for our country, our government, we citizens must fight for change and reforms, and be active in our governance, for this to happen, we must build real political parties. The Greater Democratic Party (GDP) is one such party.

Unlike most Filipino political parties that are personal by-items of rule oligarchy of family dynasties organized mainly to win elections, GDP recruits members all over the Philippines. Its members pay annual dues, abide by the party's rules, elect leaders, and select candidates for public office. All members are committed to the party's core principles and program of governance and reforms: human dignity, subsidiarity, social market economy, democracy, rule of law, good governance, and also, and building of the global Filipino nation as a peaceful and progressive nation and an inclusive democracy.

As human beings created by God in His image, we are all endowed with human dignity. Our Constitution calls on Congress to give highest priority "to protect and enhance the right of all the people to human dignity."

The state and subsidiary is our sovereign people reform the state must serve. It is "government of the people, by the people, and for the people." It is also "development from the grassroots." In GDP we understand true democracy as as "Democracy means 'Freedom' growing and nurturing democracy by local communities." Democracy is the best-only one-system to achieve good governance.

The GDP is committed to being about a social market economy. An objective are: to develop a strong state to guarantee a stable legal and political framework in order for businesses to flourish and become competitive locally and globally; to lead the planning for the country's future and be prepared to help protect people good education and health services, social housing, and security in their old age; and to protect and sustain our environment for future generations.

We the years since we regained our independence in 1946, including 21 years under our 1987 Constitution, we have suffered under the same old colonial political system instituted under American colonialism—a unitary, highly centralized presidential government, and our dysfunctional and highly centralized military system. Again, for all these years, we have been ruled by an oligarchy of family dynasties. As a consequence, we remain backward, and we still have not consolidated our democracy. It remains at risk of reverting to an authoritarian system. We Filipinos must free ourselves from our oppressive political system and institutions!

Global Filipino nation

We have become a global Filipino nation of some 87 million in our homeland and another 10 million overseas and counting. Through the Dual Citizenship Law and the Absentee Voting Law, we have begun to use these laws and institutions and incentives to participate in building a peaceful and progressive global nation and an inclusive democracy for the good of all Filipinos. Overseas Filipino citizens should be able to elect their own members of parliament in our future parliament.

For far too long, we have stressed our rights, privileges and entitlements and minimized our duties, responsibilities and obligations. All along, our neighbors in Asia have sacrificed for their national unity and progress. We need to find the golden mean to survive and protect the common good and the public interest, to build our nation, to democratize, to achieve progress and prosperity for all and progress in peace and unison with other nations. Let us then honor our Bill of Rights with a Bill of Duties.

The many of our political leaders are "transactional leaders." With their power, authority, political patronage and pork barrel, they bargain with their followers and exchange favors to gain their support and loyalty. While our democracy requires bargaining and compromise, we also need "transforming leaders" who will inspire and challenge their followers to fulfill the vision and ideals in our Constitution: "to build a just and humane society" and "a democracy under the rule of law and a regime of truth, justice, freedom, love, equality and peace."

Jose V. Abueva is the president of Ridgeview College. From 1987-1993, he was president of the University of the Philippines where he is now professor emeritus of political science. He is a member of the executive committee of the Genesis Democracy Party.

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Not in Speaker's character

THIS REFERS to the recent performance survey conducted by Pulse Asia Inc. on top national officials, which showed the ousting of House Speaker Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte as dominated by 46 percent to 45 percent. (Business, 3/21/12) Some political observers attributed Speaker Belmonte's drop in ratings to the active action of a Metro Manila congressman that the Speaker pressured the 188 congressmen into signing the impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Renato Corona.

It's true in the senior and character of Speaker Belmonte to do that. Having worked with the Speaker for nine years (2001-2010 when he was mayor of Quezon City and I as a city councilor and chairman of the committee on ways and means), I have observed Congressman Belmonte as a worker and sponsor the kind-hearted Quezon City Ordinance 1886 for lot of 2001 which called for the inclusion of the citizens' tax code and the obligations of business tax rate systems from municipal based to city-based system. "to conform with the need of the cities."

Haters did the Speaker compel me and my colleagues to sign and to approve the tax hike measure which turned to be the starting grave for the then financially ailing Quezon City government. In which the additional funds, the measure generated, the city government was able not only to pay its mounting debts, it also made Quezon City the economy's richest city.

I hope I have made my point.

—VICTOR "VIC" FERRER,
barangay chair,
Bahay Toro, Quezon City

LETTERS

Unproductive fixation

I QUITE agree with Hilary Ray Eded Lagman's observation that Congress' fixation with the impeachment of Chief Justice Renato Corona is taking its toll on its legislative mandate and the government's management of the economy. (Inquirer, 2/3/12)

Congress should focus more on enacting laws and immediately relieve the burden of our people and the country as a whole, and not solely on the impeachment of Corona.

With the economic crisis currently hobbling the Philippine world, the present administration should give more emphasis on job creation for the unemployed and on public spending on vital infrastructure projects of the government.

Then perhaps the present and the Aquino administration should act boldly, swiftly and decisively in addressing the economic woes besetting our country today.

—PEDRO REFUERZO JR.,
#727 Taylo St., Makati City

Belied allegation

I WAS MENTIONED in the article titled "RH bill has face the wrath of student groups." (Inquirer, 3/23/12)

The youth, as worldwide known, have a major stake in the legislation on this health bill, and this is the very reason I find it very important for me to speak up about it. I am a concerned citizen, and I want my voice to be heard as well by our government officials. As it is only one less than 1 week for the Filipino people.

After studying the RH bill's provision, I fully believe that this should have no place in our country. Its use of "reproductive health" is just a mask, its true purpose is to indoctrinate the youth to the idea of population control through contraceptives. And if passed, the RH bill will be a threat to the health of mothers and children. Studies show the harmful side effects of contraceptives.

Also, those who have really studied the bill and read between its lines have come to realize that it is very divisive and harmful to our country. Aside from the more than one billion dollar investments being dangled by the international organizations lobbying for its passage.

The proponents of the bill are very much free to promote their views, but I believe that more than they do not represent the majority of their views or the majority of the youth. There are also a lot of youth who are against the passage of the RH bill.

It really struck me to see the word "**invade**" in the article. 23 artists; as if the youth are furious about to rise being vexed upon. The pro-life camp may be furious, but we don't easily will choose the path of peace; enough it's enough — aggression is no efforts to convince our opponents to oppose this divisive bill.

And we will support be pro-life legislation in the near election. The RH bill proponents mentioned in the article—may be one thing within be respectful to our institution so, even a bit. The fight to preserve our nation's pro-life, pro-family, pro-God culture will not cease, and we will carry on with this fight until the RH bill shall be completely cast into oblivion.

—JOHN JOACHIM A. ROA,
john_joa1000@yahoo.com

AN ANTI-RH bill rally staged on Valentine's Day last year at PICC complex

RH advocates don't scare pro-life youth

Time for CJ to render justice to all

Outside bishop's realm of competence

P-Noy on Jojo: We understand each other; we're open to coalitions

By Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT Aquino on Wednesday indicated that all was well between him and Vice President Jejomar Binay even after the latter formed a political coalition separate from the ruling Liberal Party (LP) that the Chief Executive chairs.

Mr. Aquino said the LP was open to forging coalitions with other parties that share its goals for the country.

The President also did not rule out a coalition with Binay's United Nationalist Alliance when asked if it was possible to have a common slate with the group of the Vice President, a longtime friend of the Aquino family.

"I think there will always be arrogance. But we get to talk regularly and we understand each other," he said about efforts to drive a wedge between him and Binay.

'We've been through a lot'

"We've already been through a lot together. We understand each other as regards obligations and what each needs to do toward the

From page A1

future with Mrs. Arroyo or her party," Binay said in a statement. "I suffered a lot under the Arroyo administration. Several times were filed against me and yet I'm having supported 3rd stepping with her)."

He recalled that the Department of the Interior and Local Government and the Office of the Ombudsman sought to suspend him in October 2008 and May 2007, respectively.

Binay was reacting to the challenge posed by Budget Secretary Florencio "Butch" Abad Jr. and Cavite Rep. Joseph E.E. Abaya that he tie down his cards to let the public know whether he was supporting the administration's anticorruption reforms, specifically the prosecution of Arroyo and the trial of impeached Chief Justice Renato Corona.

The LP leaders issued the challenge after Binay's coalition, the UNA, invited allies of Arroyo and critics of the administration to join its senatorial ticket.

UNA is a coalition between Binay's Partido Demokratiko Pilipino-Laban ng Bayan (PDP-Laban) and Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile's Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino (PMP).

Estrada to the defense

Estrada said the LP task was intended as a "smear campaign" against Binay, who has been known his intention to run in the 2016 presidential election.

"They are afraid of Binay because right now, there is no one who can match him in 2016," Estrada told the reporters in a press conference.

Estrada downplayed the chances of Transportation Secretary Mar Roxas, the presumptive LP standard-bearer in 2016, against Binay. He noted that Roxas had defeated Binay in the 2010 vice presidential race.

Never heard

Estrada said he was annoyed with Abad and Abaya, who fueled challenged Binay to let the public know whether he supported the Aquino administration's anticorruption campaign.

"Who is that Butch Abad? Who is that Abaya? Never heard," Estrada said. "Where were the Butch Abads and the Abayas during the trying times of Cory (Aquino), when Binay risked his life to defend her against the coup attempts?"

Estrada defended the establishment of UNA, saying that having a political opposition was important for a democracy. "We can't afford to have just one party. It can't be one sided. There has to be an opposition so people can choose," he said.

Rabid GMA supporters

Binay said some of those scowling taxpayers were former supporters of Arroyo.

"Look who's talking? Those who are saying these things

From page A1

were once rabid supporters of GMA before. Isn't it that they used to be 'No malisan, Yes GMA?' Now, look who's pairing themselves off as untainted," Binay said.

Abad served as education secretary under the Arroyo administration before resigned in late 2005 along with nine other officials following the "Hello Garci" scandal, which the then opposition said was proof that Arroyo rigged the 2004 presidential election to ensure her victory.

Essence of democracy

The Vice President said elections were about choices. "No party can claim a monopoly of good intentions and good people selling it to us. That is the essence of democracy."

Binay said the rabbled "majoritarian" being awakened by the LP was apparently prompted by the results of USS, which will field a senatorial ticket in the 2013 midterm elections.

"I'm happy that even they wanted me to answer. It fits an inquisition? That I have to answer? My answer is obvious and I will repeat what I said. It's difficult to explain or dictate who proceed to be deaf. And to difficult to be sure by those who are pretending to be blind," he said on ABS-CBN.

Binay said those who were forming the latter were "insurgents" about the routes being to the LP and to the UNA senatorial slate.

"UNA was formed to represent capable people who want to serve the country. Having lots of choices is better than the corrupt to a totalitarian country where there is only one candidate," he said.

Maceda, Magsaysay

Abad earlier questioned Binay's decision to invite to the UNA senatorial slate former Sens. Ernesto Maceda and Kiko Pangilinan, Bulacan Rep. Wilhelmino Magsaysay of Lakas-Kampi who, he said, "have been openly and consistently critical of the administration."

Abaya considered for the UNA lineup was former Industrial Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri, who ran for senator in 2007 under Arroyo's Team Unity coalition.

Zubiri was the subject of an

From page A1

division process by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel III, who recently got his post as senator following Zubiri's resignation from the Senate.

Abaya, LP secretary general, said he "really couldn't compare" Binay's and Arroyo's graft charges. "Among the Lakas people there have not been the most constructive of backdrops."

Out of context

Pimentel, PDP-Laban president, yesterday said the LP was "taking the formation of UNA out of context."

Pimentel, who will seek reelection under the UNA ticket next year, said the coalition was not formed specifically to oppose the LP, which is expected to field its own senatorial candidates.

"The PMP and the PDP-Laban will sign a platform agreement and present it to the people, similar to what the LP would also do. Not all we know, our platforms could be the same. So why are they talking about drawing the line? I don't see any logic in that," he told the reporters.

Binay chides LP officials for sowing intrigue between him and the President

From page A1

Abad backtracks, says he did not question Binay position

By Norman Bordadora

BUDGET Secretary Florencio "Butch" Abad yesterday said he did not question Vice President Jejomar Binay's position against former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Chief Justice Renato Corona.

"It was the PCIJ banner that may have misnamed it. Not me," Abad said in a text message to the business.

"I, in fact, said that it's hard to characterize the UNA (United Nationalists Alliance) lineup as opposition because many of the personalities there are in fact cooperating with the Aquino administration," added Abad, a senior adviser to President Aquino and his campaign manager in the 2010 presidential election.

Abad said the only exception that he said were former Sen. Ernesto Maceda and Zambales Rep. Mitagene

From page A1

who have been openly and consistently criticizing (President Aquino)."

"So no one an inside versus outside conditions, the Aquino administration was in fact brought to power via a broad coalition of parties and organizations and it continues to govern on a broad coalition," Abad said.

"In fact, that's why Vice President Binay is in the Cabinet because the PDP-Laban (Binay's party) is in coalition with the LP (Liberal Party)," he added.

The LP not only welcomes coalitions but also governs through it, Abad said. "Now, looking forward to 2013. Again, coalition politics will continue to be the order of the day," he said.

"But conditions can be inside or temporary alliances or strategic based on a common set of principles and platforms of governance," he added.

He said he was extending his "hand of invitation to the LP to take a look at our platform and entertain the possibility of a coalition."

Too early

Sen. Francis Escudero, who is also being considered in the UNA lineup, said it was still "too early" to discuss politics in the context of the 2013 midterm elections.

"Alliances are political constructions, and there is rhyme and reason to that. The polls may be already two year but personally I think it's not yet the right time to be busy for political shopping," he said in a statement.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson said in challenging politicians identified with Arroyo in the UNA senatorial slate might not be a good idea for the coalition.

"It would be bad for them," he said, noting that Arroyo, even detained, has an electoral advantage since, nicknamed "very unpopular."

'Impossible'

Estrada said it was "impossible", for Binay to support Arroyo, adding that the latter had served as the campaign manager of the late Fernando Poe Jr. (FPJ). She had to Arroyo in the 2004 presidential election, where results were later questioned amid the "Hello Garci" scandal.

But the former president said he was open to accepting Arroyo allies as long as they were "never involved in graft and corruption under her administration."

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GMA pleads not guilty 3 times

From page A1

shutter also pleaded not guilty to corruption charges in the ZTE case involving National Broadband Network (NBN).

The former President pleaded not guilty three times, as she faced a second graft charge and another charge for breach of ethics for approving the NBN-ZTE contract, which the Office of the Ombudsman had found to be disadvantageous to the government.

Shutter posted P50,000 bail, which does not allow him to go free because he has already been detained while undergoing trial on worldwide charges of electoral sabotage in Pasay City Regional Trial Court. He is held in a police jail in Taguig City.

Mike Arroyo posted bail at the sandiganbayan's own last month to avoid detention.

Less than half an hour

The arraignment of Arroyo and her coaccused before the Fourth Division of the Sandiganbayan was over in less than half an hour. It may have been shorter had the court granted the motion of her lawyer Jose Flaminiano not to read the information or charges against Arroyo anymore before she entered her plea.

But the court denied Flaminiano's motion and directed that the charges be read.

Flanked by their lawyers, Arroyo first stood with Mike and Shutter before the justices as the first charge was read. After pleading not guilty, Mike and Shutter sat down and then the two other charges against Arroyo were read.

With the arraignment finished, the charges can now go to trial. The issues are the presidential June 4.

The lawyers of Arroyo and

PHOTO-OP Photographers swarm the bus carrying former President Arroyo after her arraignment at the Sandiganbayan on Wednesday.

division, on being asked by Fourth Division chair Justice Gregory Ong, also said that clients would submit waivers of appearance so they would not have to appear in court every time there was a hearing.

Tight security

Ong had noted that a lot of preparations had to be done for the appearance of Arroyo in court yesterday.

Tight security was implemented at the Sandiganbayan for the arraignment. An early arrival by police officers and bomb-sniffing dogs were seen in the compound. The number of journalists allowed inside the courtroom was also limited.

In filing the criminal charges against Arroyo in December, the Office of the Ombudsman said the former President fast-tracked and approved the signing of the NBN deal with ZTE Corp. in 2007 despite knowing it had irregularities. Arroyo later canceled the project amid allegations of bribery and overpricing.

The Ombudsman said the deal was entered into with undue haste and was disadvantageous to the government.

Arroyo was also charged with breach of ethics for playing golf and having lunch with ZTE officials while the country's proposed to build the NBN was being reviewed by the Philippine government.

Mike Arroyo, on the other hand, was found to have an unusual interest in the deal, while the Commission on Information and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza was charged for signing the contract.

Abalos was indicted for various acts leading to the signing of the deal, including his meeting with former Taiwanese and Singaporean government officials. Abalos's chief Romulo Neri and Neri's consultant Rodolfo Lozada in connection with the project.

Also accused of corruption in the NBN-ZTE case, Mendoza will be arraigned on May 14, as he is still recovering from a stroke he suffered last month.

Dilley received Arroyo to the Sandiganbayan from the court-run detention Memorial Medical Center (MMMC), where she has been detained on the electoral sabotage charge, for which she cannot post bail, while undergoing treatment for a spinal ailment.

A News5 probe found the 2007 contract negotiated and ridden with problems, including allegations that Mike Arroyo accepted bribes to push through the contract within his wife's approval.

Under public pressure, Arroyo ordered the cancellation of the deal. She left office in 2010 and found wife escaping prosecution as part of a promise by her popular successor, President Aquino, to uproot corruption.

Arroyo, in a marching light blue blazer and skirt, struck in her wheelchair as Mike followed her side about 20 minutes before the arraignment started.

Also in court were terminal, party-list Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, her doctors, and spokesperson Elena Bautista.

Also included Lapeñas.

The former President wore a dark blazer and Rosario rape wrapped around her left leg, which was used by her therapy.

She gamely chatted with reporters inside the courtroom, telling them she had struggles and warning they may get diarrhea past if they were exposed to her.

Contagious

Shingles, or herpes zoster, is caused by the same virus that causes chicken pox. Those who have it usually get rashes, though no visible ones could be seen on Arroyo's right day.

"I hope you've all had chicken pox. I have the shingles now. It's contagious but you will not get shingles, you will get chicken pox," she told reporters.

She said the pain was excruciating. "It's like a very, very bad case of flu," she said.

She said she felt the symptoms on Friday. She first had a backache, and then her doctors saw blisters on her back.

Ex-President's day

Arroyo said her doctors advised her on Tuesday not to go out, but she said she did not want to postpone her arraignment any longer.

Arroyo also talked to reporters about her routine inside the MMMC. She said she hears Mass at 7 a.m., and then takes her morning walk. She has physical therapy at 10:00 a.m., and starts to receive visitors at 2 p.m. Her day is over, she said. She is usually in bed by 8 p.m.

She said she was writing more than reading, and was busy with her memoirs. She was also writing about social bias, learning, as well as laws her administration

P-Noy has no time to read GMA book

From page A1

with Chinese telecommunications giant ZTE Corp.

After her arraignment, Arroyo was brought to the Pasay City Regional Trial Court in the House of Representatives, and records that she was writing her memoirs.

She is detained at the Philippine Memorial Medical Center for her non-bailable electoral sabotage charges filed against her by the Commission on Elections and the Department of Justice involving fraud in the 2007 senatorial elections. **Norman Bordadora**

From page A1

managed to keep the price of gas from rising too high despite the fact that world prices then were higher than they are now.

Case is moving

Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III said Arroyo's arraignment was "a very good development." It means the case is "moving and on the time, we will know the (decision)," she said in a talk with reporters yesterday.

In Malacañang, deputy presidential spokesperson Abigail Valte urged the public to follow closely the trial of Arroyo and her coaccused after the impeachment trial of Chief Justice Renato Corona.

"The Sandiganbayan now has jurisdiction over (Arroyo)," Valte said. "We hope our people will continue to monitor the developments. Di (be cases with interest)."

Mike Arroyo told reporters that he had confidence in the justices handling the graft cases, as they had brought to his mind he believed they would not bow to any pressures. With reports from Norman Bordadora, Marvin Rivera and AP

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres
Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ortuoste

SPORTS

Llamados rip Kings, take 1-0 semis lead

By Mayong B. Castillo

GINEBRA forward Rudy Hatfield tries to score off B-Meg import Denzel Bowles during their semifinal match last night. ALEXIS MACLANG

ANTIPOLO—B-Meg shared off a fearful first quarter and wisely dominated Barangay Ginebra in the next three for an 82-67 victory last night that not only gave the Llamados a 1-0 semifinal lead but also put huge chew on the Gin Kings' confidence for the rest of their PBA Commissioner's Cup series.

Held to just eight points in the first 12 minutes, B-Meg took Ginebra by the throat and stroked the Gin Kings to just 21 points in the next two quarters—a total that matched their first-quarter output—to savor away at the Smart Araneta Coliseum here.

In fact, Ginebra was held to 45 points until the final 7:40 as the Llamados, who lost their last match with the Kings, managed to build a 25-point bubble even with James Yap not in his offensive best.

Game 2 of this series will be held tomorrow at the Smart Araneta Coliseum in Cubao, and it would take more than just minor adjustments for Ginebra coach Tim Cone to turn this tide, especially with Mark Caguioa out.

The absence of a legitimate guardinger in Caguioa told heavily on the Kings, especially when the Llamados went breathing away.

"Nobody expected this (series) to be high-scoring," B-Meg coach Tim Cone said. "We had to bleed for our points and get going in the second half and built a lead. A surprising lead if you ask me.

"But a first win (in a series) doesn't mean much. You have to follow it up," he continued. "The second game is always important, because it either gives you a big lead or you fall into a (deep) hole."

It was a physical match to say the least, with Jackson Vroman shouting his frustration by pushing Sonny Thoss to the floor with hands in the late early in the fourth quarter. He was lucky to have been slapped just a flagrant foul penalty one.

Vroman was at the forefront of the great first quarter by the Kings, but he was never the same the rest of the way. After shooting seven points in the opening period, Vroman hit two in the second, a free throw in the third and was scoreless in the fourth.

Ginebra
B-MEG 82—Banko 21, Simon 13, Dionisio 8, Sta 8, Ilustre 8, Wilkinson 6, Ward 5, Hill 4, Pingris 4, Villanueva 2, Serrano 0.

GINEBRA—Vroman 12, Lalaguna 12, Ellis 10, Yap 8, Tubid 8, Tenorio 7, Caidic 0, Ildefonso 0, Abueva 0, Ai-Ai 0, Cortez 0, Mallari 0, Ramirez 0, Mariano 0.

Quarters: 17-7, 28-26, 58-42, 82-67

De Villa nails first US NCAA crown

DE VILLA

By Jong Arcasas

THE LITTLE lady is a busy just nailed something big.

Former Philippine Ladies Open champ Debbie de Villa clinched her first US NCAA title by winning the individual plum for Texas Tech Tuesday (Wednesday in Manila) at the Pinero and Knights Invitational golf tournament in Florida.

De Villa, up by four after compiling a five-under-par 66 in Monday's opening two rounds at the Sunrise Country Club, struggled with a two-over 74 in the final 18 holes but still finished two strokes ahead of Purdue's Paola Reis.

De Villa also powered Texas Tech to a second place finish in team play.

"She felt very comfortable and confident with her game," her mom Lilibeth said after Debbie completed her first finish in her nine with the Early Raiders. Her previous best finish was a seventh place performance at the Texas Stone Challenge.

Deb is racing against time, wonderfully, as the former Greenhills Christian Fellowship student is hoping to finish her pre-law studies in three and a half years this December.

Deb's older sister, Liezel, who is a former jueguil campaigner herself, is graduating summa cum laude at Jose California State University in San Marcos with a degree in business administration.

Texas lost the team title to Central Florida by just a stroke. Tech came into the round leading Central Florida by four strokes and led by as many as six in handing to the back nine. The 'host' quickly disappeared, though, letting Tech down in third tournament title of the year.

Beverly Mendoza, another Filipina in the Texas Tech team, also had a 74 like de Villa and erased tied-for-21st overall.

The tournament marked Tech's final tune up prior to the Big 12 Championships in late April.

With reports from the Texas Tech website

Big Chill eyes 4th straight victory

By Cedelf P. Tupas

BIG Chill goes for a fourth straight victory under new coach Robert Sison when the Superchargers clash with Blackwater Sports in the PBA D-League Foundation Cup at the Ynares Center in Antipolo.

Game time is at 2 p.m. with the Superchargers and Elite, both carrying 3-1 records, contending solo second spot behind the NLEX Road Warriors.

Cebuana Lhuillier hopes to bounce back against the Cagayan Rising Suns in the season opener at 12 noon.

The Gems are dealing with injuries to key players Renzo Ala-

GAMES TODAY
(Ynares Center, Antipolo)
12 p.m.—Cebuana Lhuillier vs Cagayan Valley
2 p.m.—Big Chill vs Blackwater Sports

mon, Jewel Ellis and Lenard Adriano and coach Luigi Trillo has the unenviable task of shaking up the roster and finding the right combinations.

"We have to fix ourselves first," said Trillo. "Trying different combinations has been my priority at the moment."

The Rising Suns are still looking for their first victory after three straight losses. But they will have coach Ryan Pascual back from suspension following an incident in the pre-season where he hit a game official.

After dropping its first assignment to NLEX, Big Chill has looked renewed confidence with Sison at the helm.

Sison has led and a system predicated on a stingy defense that leads to a fluid offense that has worked wonders for the Superchargers, who have a wide array of gunners and players thriving in transition.

"Right now, we just want to continue our winning ways," said Sison.

POC mum on Loyzaga replacement

By Marc Anthony Reyes and Jane Navarro

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee said its recommendation as to who will replace resigned commissioner Chito Loyzaga in the PBC, but refused to divulge the name it submitted to Malacañang.

This developed as the POC maintained that it was abandoning a major grassroots program it earlier agreed on during a sports summit—a decision that has been linked to Loyzaga's resignation.

Former police general Jesus Mamaguelod and golfer Juan Antonio Iggy Clavecilla have been mentioned as possible replacements for Loyzaga, who will focus on taking care of his father—the architect for basketball great Caloy—in Australia.

But POC chief Jose "Peping" Cojuangco kept mum on his recommendation.

"It is not advisable to mention names of possible replacements because if they are not appointed, people might think there is something wrong with the process," said Cojuangco.

While the appointment of POC commissioner is largely a prerogative of Malacañang, Cojuangco has pushed for the inclusion of other sporting luminaries, Robin Garcia and Buddy Andrada, appointed by President Aquino to chair and commissioner of the government's sports finishing agency.

Meanwhile, Garcia yesterday said the plan to deploy ASF coaches as provincial and team athletics discovered there has been delayed, with the move initially announced for this purported monthly directed to the different national sports associations.

Garcia added the PSC will implement the project once the agency identifies the coaches fit to receive financial stipends.

"Right now, it's not doable," he said of the project agreed upon initially by the POC, PSC, the Philippine Sportswriters and Basketball Association Unido. "We don't want to make the mistake of picking a coach only to find out that he's not capable of carrying out the task."

Garcia said the P500 million that the PSC was supposed to pour into the project could possibly be used to fund the Weightlifting team yet given previous issues by the PSC.

ACCTION! rescue Greg Stiemsma (left) duels against Miami's James Jones in the second half of their game. AFP/JOE

KG helps Celtics cool Heat anew

THE Boston Celtics stepped up their race to the playoffs on Tuesday by upsetting Miami, 115-107, for their second victory over the Heat in 10 days.

Kevin Garnett recorded 24 points and nine rebounds and Rajon Rondo had 28 points and 15 assists for the Celtics (39-34), who are two games out of third spot in the Eastern Conference.

Boston has reached the NBA Finals in two of the last four seasons but with an aging roster, has considered them a legitimate title contender amid their recent rise.

"We've been put to the back burner all year long. But in our opportunity to show the world we still have a lot left in the tank," forward Paul Pierce told reporters.

"It's a fun time of year, the playoffs are right around the corner and we finally do have momentum."

LeBron James tallied 36 points, seven rebounds and seven assists for Miami, while Dwyane Wade scored 26 but the Heat (49-24) dipped three games behind top seed Chicago after suffering their second home loss in three games.

Chicago beat the New York Knicks in a late game.

Miami had previously enjoyed a 17-game winning streak on their home floor.

The Heat, dominated by the Celtics in a 14-point loss last week, fell behind by 11 after the first quarter and never recovered.

Boston shot 60 percent from the field and Rondo had his 15th consecutive game with double-digit assists, the longest such streak since John Stockton strung 23 games together in 1992.

The Heat have been inconsistent recently, with the losses in 10 games, and are looking to find form for the postseason.

"We're not in a period of concern. The team played well," Wade said. "This (LeBron) shot the ball very well. When they shoot like that, it's going to be tough to beat them."

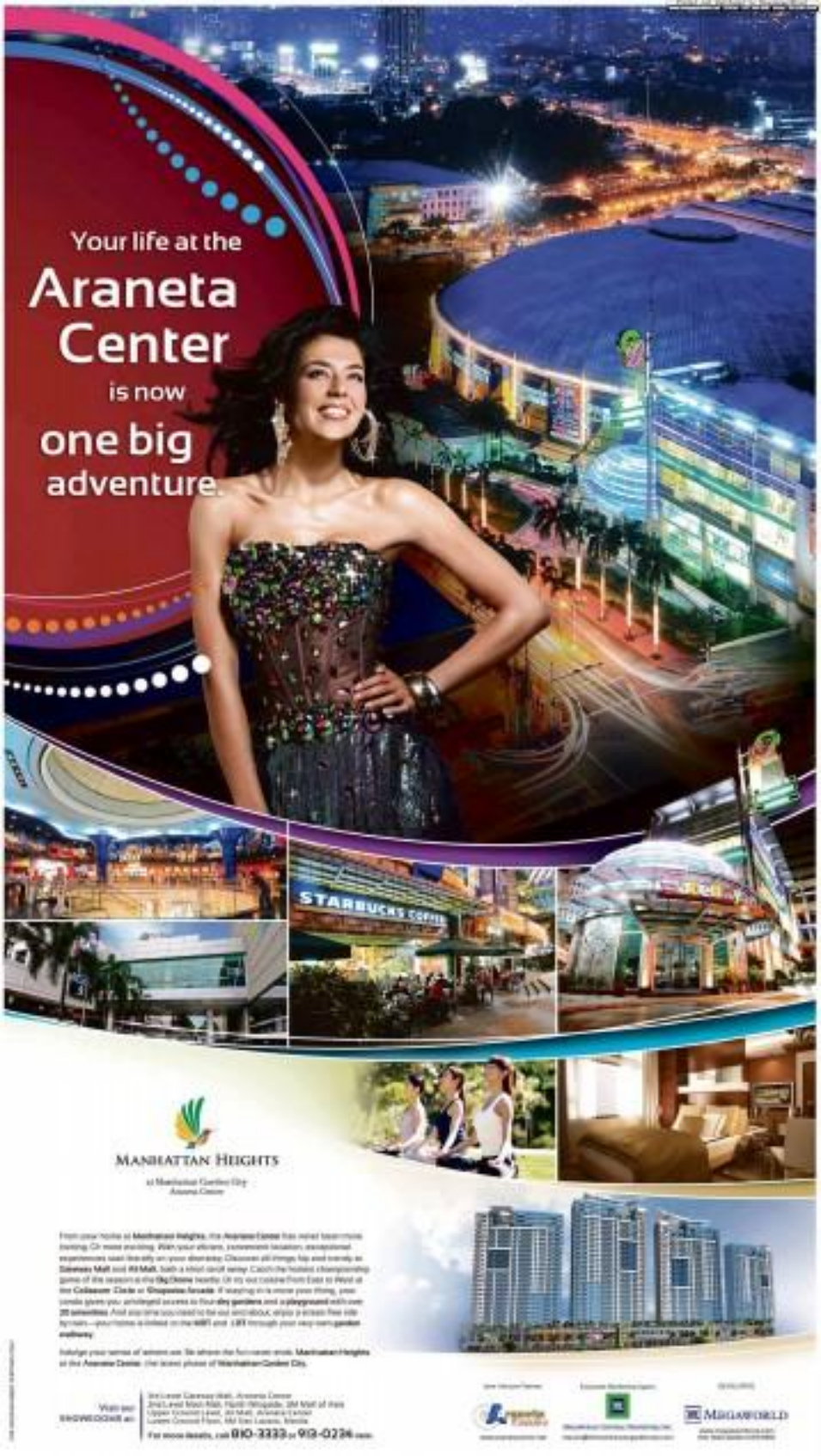
In Chicago, the Bulls overcame the absence of Derrick Rose again and comfortably beat the New York Knicks, 99-86.

Richard Hamilton scored 20 points and Luol Deng added 19 for Chicago. Hamilton had 18 points in the third quarter to help Chicago stay ahead after building a 12-point halftime lead.

In Orlando, Dwight Howard scored 26 points and Jason Richardson added 25 as the Magic came off the bench for the first time and scored a season-high 39 points to lead the slumping Philadelphia 76ers over the Nets, 107-98.

The win snapped a four-game losing skid for Philadelphia, giving it a half-game lead over the Knicks for the No. 7 seed in the East.

OTHER RESULTS (Tuesday): 93, Kings 102 (Thomas 32, Magette 19, Landry 10, Hickson 10); Hornets 96, Pacers 90 (Gordon 30, Belinelli 20, Stojakovic 15, Aminu 11, Okafor 10); Wizards 103, Bobcats 96 (Crawford 23, Seraphin 20, Blatche 19, Booker 11, Singler 10, Vesely 10); Timberwolves 104, Rockets 101 (Beasley 25, Ridnour 20, Pekovic 19, Budinger 11, Williams 10, Martin 10, Brewer 10); Jazz 103, Suns 97 (Jefferson 20, Hayward 19, Favors 16, Kanter 14, Foye 11, Tinsley 10, Evans 10, Miles 10, Fesenko 10, Price 10, Gordon 10, Lopez 10, Dragic 10, Frye 10, Childress 10, Warrick 10, Tucker 10, Dudley 10, Hill 10, Morris 10, Redd 10, Green 10, Bledsoe 10, Ellington 10, Johnson 10, Thomas 10, Wright 10, Young 10, Smith 10, Brown 10, Jones 10, Davis 10, Williams 10, Anderson 10, Taylor 10, Wilson 10, Moore 10, Harris 10, Clark 10, Lewis 10, Walker 10, Hall 10, Allen 10, Scott 10, Young 10, King 10, Baker 10, Carter 10, Mitchell 10, Roberts 10, Turner 10, Phillips 10, Campbell 10, Parker 10, Collins 10, Edwards 10, Stewart 10, Morris 10, Rivers 10, Griffin 10, Jordan 10, Paul 10, Billups 10, Kaman 10, Gomez 10, Dunleavy 10, Redick 10, Nowitzki 10, Marion 10, Terry 10, Kidd 10, Stevenson 10, Chandler 10, Barea 10, Mahinmi 10, Cardinal 10, Brand



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DID YOU KNOW

THERE are 248 foreign detainees in the country as of February, according to the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology. Of the total, around 60 percent or 154 foreigners are detained in the National Capital Region.
Jakarr Dandan, Inquirer Research

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Family of four killed in Cainta fire

DIRTY BUT TASTY
A vendor selling dirty ice cream pushes his cart on the academic oval of the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, Quezon City, the better to interrupt runners and joggers looking for a cool treat after all that exercise.

By Nitz Calleja

THE IRON grills on the windows doomed a family of four when these prevented them from getting out of their burning house in Cainta town, Rizal province on Tuesday morning, according to a report released only yesterday by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.

Firefighters later found the charred bodies of Gary Nepomuceno, 46, his children Francine Nepomuceno, 4, and Rochzar Nepomuceno, 2, as well as that of their relative Juliet Nepomuceno, 42, huddled together in a room.

Two other relatives identified as Minerva Nepomuceno, 64, and Ligaya Nepomuceno, 38, managed to escape although they suffered minor burns.

The blaze which was first reported to authorities at 6:17 a.m. on Tuesday gutted the Nepomuceno's bungalow-type house on Champaca Street, Greenland Subdivision in Barangay San Juan.

A fire still presumed is from spreading to other houses and

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2 Manila cops face raps, axe for robbery-extortion

By Jayzon T. Garcia

TWO MANILA policemen have dismissal from the service after they were positively identified by two Koreans in Pandacan who extorted P30,000 from them on April 7.

In addition, PO2 Reynaldo Rellel Oliva and PO1 Vincent Paul Ubalda Medina—both members of the Manila Police District (MPD) Station 5 in Pandacan—have been charged with robbery-extortion at the City Prosecutor's Office.

The complaint against them was filed by Koreans nationals Lee Jun Heo and Baek Sung Hyun, who claimed that on the aforesaid 3 a.m. on Black Saturday, they were walking back to their hotel near the Malate Church when two policemen in a police car arrested them and demanded P30,000 to release.

The victims later positively identified the two policemen from the photos shown to them by investigators of the MPD General Assignment Section.

The photos were that of members of the MPD Station 5 and mobile patrol unit.

Although the two policemen denied the accusation against them, their station commander, Supt. Jesse Modequillo, ordered them to submit themselves to an intensive investigation.

"I told them, 'If you haven't done anything, clear your name. But if you are positively identified, we can do nothing about that. But better to face the charges,'" Modequillo said in a phone interview.

Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, himself a former policeman, yesterday ordered the filing of summary dismissal proceedings against the two.

He also expressed disappointment that rookie law enforcers continued to get caught for their involvement in illegal activities and suggested that the "bad eggs" be removed from the service immediately.

"The policy being applied [in] erring cops such as these two will be the same as if the one applied in previous cases). Policemen who engage in robbery, extortion and abuses against innocent civilians have no place to stay a minute longer in the force," he said in a statement.

In February, Lim nominated the Sta. Cruz police station commander and members of the anti-illegal drugs unit in all of the city's police stations.

This was after four Koreans claimed that anti-drug police operatives from the MPD Station 3 kidnapped them and extorted money from them as well.

A customs messenger who 'delivers'

ON TARGET
RAMON TULFO

I MOURN the passing on of my friend and contemporary, Angelo Castro Jr., broadcaster par excellence.

Angelo and I worked for the Manila Broadcasting Company (MBC) in 1976.

We were each other again after the Edsa 1 revolution when ABS-CBN was about to make a comeback after it was closed down during the Marcos dictatorship.

Angelo called to recruit me to join TV Patrol as a commentator, but I told him that viewers might laugh at me because I had a dark Visayan accent whenever I speak Tagalog.

He laughed.

During our stint in radio in the 1970s, the medium of communication of announcers to their listeners was mostly English.

Nowadays, one hardly encounters broadcasters speaking English; if he did so, he would lose his listenership.

Radio listeners and TV viewers were, Angelo used to say, are much different from those in the 1960s, 70s and 80s who were more concerned with facts rather than sideissues.

"Men, viewers and listeners were don't care about how you sound as long as we talk intelligently," Angelo said.

My thick regional accent, he said, would endear me to many viewers in Metro Manila who were then exiled to provinces in the Visayas.

Still, I ally dallied in joining ABS-CBN because I didn't believe my Visayan accent was an asset rather than a liability.

It was years later, when General Radios Medias in 1991 that I realized Angelo was right after all.

My "Sumbong Mo Kay Tulfo" program became an instant hit in spite of—or because of—my Visayan accent.

I owe my success in the broadcast medium to Angelo Castro Jr.

* * *

In sorting customer-complaints where their colleagues with his boss is widely known in the Bureau of Customs, it said to frequent the casinos and cockpits and lose hundreds of thousands of pesos every time.

His boss, a married woman, reportedly lets him borrow money from her to cover his losses.

At the customs bureau, there is no difference between a messenger and an examiner, so long as one can collect.

Philippine Airlines, the nation's flag carrier, is now 49 percent owned by four conglomerates: San Miguel Corp. (SMC),

If Ramon Ang, SMC president and chief executive officer, brings his brand of management and leadership to PAL, the airline will regain its former prestige in winning hearts (time).

But it's going to be tough anyway for Ang.

* * *

A congressman from the Visayas was burned from the plenary session recently because he was wearing a flowing Tagalog and trapping pants.

The chairman of the plenary session hydrochloride as "shabu" probably got into this congressman's head.

The congressman seldom graces his office, if at all.

The few times he shops by his staff practically drive about his smaller ways, and wrote his anger than when he's "dry."

During dry spells, he alleged, he asks one of his staff members to buy shabu.

This congressman is reportedly the first one left in the House completely hooked on drugs.

* * *

If you want a cure-free blurtals, far from the madding crowd in Metro Manila, think of visiting province in Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte, Tarlac, Pangasinan, Batangas province.

The air is about 100 feet above sea level, complete with a rainbow and nature reserve.

The air is fresh as bracket fountain water is about every and streams flow from the mountains.

I bought myself a piece of land in Batalan and I wish to share with you my delight now the purchase.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

[illegible]

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For further information, please refer to:

Engr. Jose Fernando
Regional River Rehabilitation Commission
7th Floor, Triumph Building #191-E Quezon Avenue, Quezon City
Telephone Nos. 1800-1800-00-0000 local 101
E-mail Address: rrrc@rrrc.gov.ph
Web Address: http://www.rrrc.gov.ph

PDI Apr 12 2012

METROBRIEFS

Arnok shot dead

TWO MEN on a motorcycle shot Arnok more than once early on Monday morning in Pasay City, San Investigator PO3 Rodolfo Rosario said that witnesses told him that Jay Tapan was in a tricycle when two men on a motorcycle stopped the vehicle on Zamora Street, pulled Arnok out and shot him at close range. He was taken to Pasay City General Hospital where medical officers said that Tapan had earlier sought treatment after he was injured in the fray. The police later learned that Arnok was a suspect because he went around with a still unidentified person.

Alec Alcantara

Rape suspect falls

ONE OF TWO CITY of Manila's 10 most wanted rape rivals nabbed at Pandacan, Manila on Tuesday afternoon, Chief Inspector Lito Mariquez Jr. of the District of Pandacan Street in Sta. Ana, Manila who is being sought for the rape of an 11-year-old girl in 2010, was arrested in his house in the area around noon on Tuesday, said Sr. Judge Amelia Tria Indefor of the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 8. Earlier, the police received information that Mariquez would be returning to his house, prompting them to monitor the neighborhood for a while before he finally showed up, he was arrested by operatives of the Manila Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Group. Chief Insp. Carlo Magno Manuel submitted a report.

Jayzon T. Garcia

RESORTS WORLD PARTNERS WITH CARITAS MANILA In line with Resorts World Manila's (RWM) comprehensive corporate social responsibility program, the company recently partnered with Caritas Manila to help the youth in Pasay by donating to the charity organization's "Youth Servant Leadership and Education program. RWM employees are encouraged to engage in activities such as literacy and values drive, visits to the elderly and community outreach programs. Pictured (from left) are Gigie Silva, Resorts World's human resources director; (TIMG) CSR and employee engagement senior manager Jardee Bisnella, TIMG vice president for HR; Caritas Manila's Mai Tangco and Fr. Aloysius Pascual; Kingson Sian, TIMG president; Gino Almario, TIMG legal department vice president; and Christianne Cruz, assistant vice president for casino administration and training.

Woman jumps to death in Las Piñas mall

By Nathaniel R. Philips

A WOMAN who leapt to her death at a mall in Las Piñas City would have remained unidentified had it not been for a SIM (Subscriber Identity Module) card found which the police traced to her wallet.

The victim, Celedonia Aquino, 53, a widow living at Commercio Village, Admiral Subdivision in Las Piñas, jumped from the third floor of SM Southmall at around 2:20 p.m. on Tuesday.

"It's an apparent suicide. We have witnesses who told us that she jumped from the third floor of the mall and that no one was there to stop her," case investigator PO1 Ernesto Bautista Jr. told the Inquirer in a phone interview.

Aquino was rushed to Las Piñas City Medical Center but she was pronounced dead on arrival due to traumatic head and body injuries.

"When we searched her body, we found a wallet but there was no ID in it. However, we found a SIM card where we learned the contact number of a relative whom we then contacted to let her out," Bautista said.

He added that Alvin told them that his mother had been taking antidepressant drugs for an unspecified medical condition.

PASIG RIVER REHABILITATION COMMISSION
9th Floor, Triumph Building #191-E Quezon Avenue, Quezon City
Telephone Nos. 920-5232 (to) Web Address: http://www.rrrc.gov.ph
E-mail Address: rrrc@rrrc.gov.ph

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF SECURITY SERVICES FOR THE PASIG RIVER FERRY SERVICE

The Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission, through the General Appropriation Act (GAA) FY 2012 intends to apply the sum of P 9,240,000.00 being the approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the contract of Security Services for the Pasig River Ferry Service (FY 2012) (PR #10-02). Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

The Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission now invites bids for the procurement of security services for the Pasig River Ferry Service. Delivery of the Service is required upon receipt of Notice to Proceed. Bidders should have completed within the last three (3) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents, particularly in Section IX Instructions to Bidders.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to Commonwealth Act 138.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours starting (09:00AM to 05:00PM).

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be acquired by interested bidders on April 12, 2012 (09:00AM to 5:00 PM) from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of P5,000.00.

It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) provided that bidders shall pay the non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bids.

The Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission will hold a Pre-Bid Conference on April 25, 2012, 2:00 PM at PRRC Conference Room, which shall be open to all interested parties.

Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before May 17, 2012, 10:00 AM. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in ITB Clause 18.

Bid opening shall be on May 17, 2012, 10:00 AM at PRRC Conference Room. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below. Late bids shall not be accepted.

The Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further information, please refer to:

Engr. Jose Fernando
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PDI Apr 12 2012

The BAC Chairperson

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PDI Apr 12 2012

Family of 4 killed in Cainta fire

Firefighters put it out at 4:55 a.m., according to Chief Insp. Bernard Soares, the fire recorded.

"But the window grills in all three rooms of the house trapped [the victims] and made escape impossible," Soares said.

He added that firemen who responded tried to bore a hole in the wall in other direction to get inside the house and bring the victims out.

"But we still could not [as inside] because [the fire] was already huge and the heat from the flames was where the fire was concentrated," Soares said.

The cause of the blaze remained under investigation but probers suspected that a unattended lighted candle or lamp started it.

According to investigators, power in the house was cut last month due to unpaid electricity bills.

The damage caused by the fire was estimated at P600,000. No one was reported killed or injured.

In Valenzuela City, a blaze broke out in a plastics and styrofoam factory on Tuesday night, leaving an estimated P16 million worth of damage in its wake.

PO1 Julius Sangcopan said that the fire broke out at 7:44 p.m. in the Tyson Industrial Corp. office on M. Gregorio Street, Barangay Canumay West.

Seventy guards in the area said that the blaze started in a warehouse of the building owned by Tai Hsing. It then spread to other warehouses before it was put out at 11 p.m.

Although authorities did not have a difficult time getting to the area, Sangcopan said it took them more than three hours to put out the blaze because the warehouse contained highly flammable materials. With Krissine Pelino-Mangonon

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Quncio

NEW KING Malaysian King Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah (left) holds the Keris beside Queen Hamidah Hamidun during his coronation ceremony at Malacca's 14th king on Wednesday. —

US presidential race down to two

WASHINGTON—Mitt Romney all but secured the Republican nomination after Rick Santorum suspended a tenacious shoestring campaign, paving down the US presidential race to two clear choices.

A charismatic Democratic president, vulnerable to any sign that the tentative economic upswing might stall, faces off against a multimillionaire who has struggled to connect with his own party's conservatives but hopes his business background will convince voters he can put the economy on a path to steadier recovery.

Now Romney and President Barack Obama are free to focus on confronting each other, something they had already been increasingly doing in recent weeks as the former Massachusetts governor gradually emerged as his party's likely nominee.

Obama has hesitated to throw down the gauntlet with the other.

Obama said Democrats would ensure the rich pay their fair share, while focusing on investments in education, science and research and caring for the most vulnerable. By contrast, he said, Republicans would elimi-

SCHMITT —

OBAMA —

nate education and clean energy programs so they can give still more tax breaks to the rich.

Obama did not mention Romney by name, but the economic fairness message was the theme of his day...and almost squarely at the former governor, who one hundred x private equity firm and is worth up to $200 million.

The renewed focus on the economy suits Democrats, whose conservative credentials are suspect among the Republican base because of his past moderate stances on social issues such as abortion...culminating topics that were pushed to the forefront by Santorum's primaries.

While Santorum's exit is a benefit of the most conservative Republican voters, Romney vaults his much better organized and well-financed campaign, had accumulated a virtually insurmountable lead in delegates to the party's national convention in August. AP

Syria defies ceasefire plan

BEIRUT—Syrian troops have defied a UN-brokered ceasefire plan, launching fresh attacks on rebel-held areas, last special envoy Kofi Annan said there was still time to salvage a truce that he described as the only chance for peace.

Ukraine's peace bids for Syrian uprising, the international community has nearly run out of options for halting the slide toward civil war. On Tuesday, Annan insisted his peace initiative remains "very much alive"—in part because there is no viable alternative.

The UN has ruled out any military intervention of the type that helped bring down Libya's Moammar Gadhafi, and several rounds of sanctions and other attempts to isolate President Bashar al-Assad have done little to stop the bloodshed.

"If you want to take (the plan) off the table, what will you replace it with?" Annan told reporters in Hatay, Turkey, where he toured a camp sheltering Syrian refugees.

Facing a Tuesday deadline to pull back its tanks and troops, the Syrian government had said it was withdrawing from certain areas, including the rebellious central province of Homs. But France called the claims a "trap and deception" and activists said there was no sign of a withdrawal.

Residents of Homs reported some of the heaviest shelling in months.

"Hundreds of mortar rounds and shells were falling around all day," resident Tarek Badrakhan told The Associated Press. He said a makeshift hospital housing wounded people and dozens of corpses was destroyed in the shelling.

"It's now on the ground," he said.

In a letter to the UN Security Council, obtained by The Associated Press, Annan said Syria has not pulled troops and heavy military equipment out of cities and towns, and that the regime's last remaining condition for the entire ceasefire at risk.

The council strongly backed Annan, with all 15 members—including Syrian allies China and Russia—approving a press statement expressing "deep concern" at the failure by Damascus to withdraw its troops and heavy equipment.

"Obviously, members of the council are unified in their grave concern that this deadline has passed and the violence has not only continued but over the last 10 days has intensified," said Susan Rice, US ambassador to the UN. AP

Suu Kyi, Burma's president hold talks

NAYPYIDAW—Burma (Myanmar) opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi on Wednesday held talks with President Thein Sein for the first time since her landmark election to political office earlier this month.

The two met at the president's official residence in the capital Naypyidaw and were expected to have lunch with Thein Sein's family, according to her aides.

It was her second meeting with the former junta prime minister since he took office last year, marking the end of nearly half a century of outright military rule.

When asked by AFP earlier, Suu Kyi declined to say what she expected would be discussed during the closed-door talks, which a government official earlier described as "a private meeting." The veteran dissident has special suggestions that she could enter government after her by-election victory.

But she has not ruled out taking on an advisory role, particularly on the subject of the ethnic minority conflicts that have gripped parts of the country since independence in 1948.

The pair held talks in August 2011 in the same exclusive compound, but Wednesday's meeting was widely considered to be a surprising sign of reforms, including welcoming Suu Kyi's party into the political mainstream and freeing scores of political prisoners.

Their meeting paved the way for the opposition leader to rejoin the official political arena and stand for election for public office for the first time.

Suu Kyi has said she believes Thein Sein genuinely wants to pursue democratic reforms although it is unclear whether he has the total support of the military.

The 66-year-old, who spent 15 of the past 22 years locked up by the junta, will take her seat in the lower house of parliament for the first time on April 23 after a decisive victory on April 1 by-elections. AFP

SUU KYI AFP/FILE

S.Koreans vote under North's rocket threat

SEOUL—South Koreans voted on Wednesday in parliamentary elections that pit the ruling conservatives and their "Queen of Elections" against the mostly liberal-leaning generation of younger voters, and the outcome could hinge on how many use it to cast ballots.

Voters have by and large ignored an impending rocket launch by North Korea scheduled for this week, and the major issues at stake are energy prices, allegations of abuse in government and growing discontent over the power of big business, all of which could go against the ruling Saenuri Party.

Opinion polls indicate that the conservatives and the left-wing opposition parties are in a dead heat in the election that serves as a curtain-raiser for the more important presidential vote in December. Three polls ignore under-40 voters, many analysts say arguing that the liberal opposition could emerge a surprise winner.

Moreover, a low turnout would bode well for conservatives. In the turnout was 8.8 percent, compared with 8.1 percent in the previous parliamentary vote, according to the National Election Commission.

Political leaders from the left have appealed for high turnout, which has traditionally boosted their numbers, calling for 60 percent of voters to go to the polls. Just 46.1 percent voted in the 2008 parliamentary election. Reuters

China's top politician suspended

BEIJING—A flamboyant and populist politician who would normally be destined for the top ranks of China's leadership was stripped of his most powerful posts on Tuesday and his wife charged in the murder of a British businessman as Chinese leaders moved to stem a scandal that has exposed divisive infighting.

The announcement that Bo Xilai was being suspended from the Communist Party's Politburo and Central Committee and that his wife was a suspect in a homicide investigation put an end to a colorful political career. Media savvy with a populist flair, Bo gained a nationwide following for leaving organized crime and for rewriting communist culture while running the inland megacity of Chongqing.

His publicity-seeking ways angered some in the top leadership, however. In recent weeks, allegations of Bo's and his family's misdeeds leaked into public view, threatening to complicate preparations by the leadership for a leadership, once-a-decade transition to younger leaders at a congress later this year.

"This means the political career of Bo Xilai is over," said Cheng Li, a Chinese politics expert at the Brookings Institution in Washington. "The party wants to really resolve the Bo Xilai crisis in a relatively short period of time. They want to make sure that the attention for the 18th party congress will not suffer too much from the Bo Xilai episode."

Bo's patrons included retired party elders who retain influence over senior appointments, and among his vocal supporters were influential generals and party members, scholars and ordinary Chinese who intensely clamored to see him. The removal raises questions about whether Chinese leaders will have to make concessions to their to achieve the political balance that has sustained factional fighting in recent decades.

"A political succession that seemed completely predictable has been upended," said Jame Tendi Bryce, a China politics expert at the University of Miami. "We may be in for more surprises."

An editorial in the Communist Party's People's Daily newspaper appealed for unity and said the investigation into Bo's violations would show the leadership's "solid resolve in safeguarding party discipline and the rule of law."

Tuesday's announcements, carried by state media, provided details of what has been a lurid and embarrassing scandal for the leadership. AP

Iran imposes oil 'counter sanctions'

DUBAI—Iran has cut oil exports to Spain and may halt sales to Germany and Italy, state's English-language news television reported on Tuesday, in an apparent move to strengthen its position ahead of crucial talks with world powers later this week.

But, in an indication that Tehran's "counter sanctions" were of little impact, Spain's biggest refiner said it had already replaced Iranian crude with Saudi Arabian oil months ago.

Iran has played a tit-for-tat game over crude shipments since The European Union (EU) decided in January to expel Iranian oil imports as of July, part of a range of tough new sanctions aimed at forcing Tehran to curb the atomic work that the West suspects is part of a nuclear weapons program.

Talks between Tehran and six world powers aimed at easing the nuclear standoff are set to resume in Istanbul on Saturday and could pave the way for an easing of sanctions and might lift the threat of Israeli air strikes on Iran.

Oil states have sought alternative oil supplies ahead of July's deadline, with Iran threatening to cut exports first, something Iran's Press TV said was well under way.

"Tehran has cut all supplies to Spain after stopping crude export to Greece in part of its counter sanctions," Press TV said, citing undisclosed sources, adding that a similar move was being considered for Germany and Italy.

A spokesperson for Spanish refiner Repsol said it had not been buying Iranian oil for months.

"We trade out of Iran for no more Iranian," he said.

The EU was the second biggest buyer of Iranian oil after China before the embargo, which is a direct strike on the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) member's biggest source of export income.

Repsol's Iranian imports were estimated at around 60,000 barrels per day last year, making it one of Tehran's medium-sized European customers.

Most European buyers have already reduced or halted their purchases from Iran in anticipation of the July 1 deadline and because of increasing difficulties in paying for the crude after tough new sanctions were imposed on Iranian banks.

Earlier on Tuesday, a defiant President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said Iran could withstand a total embargo on its oil sales for several years.

"We must say to them (the West) that we have (but much income) saved that even if we did not sell oil for two to three years, the country would manage easily," the semi-official Fars news agency quoted him as saying.

But some consumers hope the sanctions pressure will squeeze concessions from Tehran.

British foreign office Minister Alistair Burt said the fact that Tehran had agreed the talks should assist its nuclear program.—something is sought to avoid Iran's—was an optimistic start.

"In the past, they have been unsuccessful because the Iranian government has not been prepared to talk about its nuclear program. If that is different now, then these talks have a good chance of success," Burt said in a "video blog" recorded for a foreign affairs website aimed at Iranians called "Dialogue for Iranian" http://alistairburt.fco.gov.uk/en/. Reuters

WORLD BRIEFS

N. Korea leader named to new top post

PYONGYANG—North Korean leader Kim Jong-un was named to what appears to be a top post at the ruling Workers' Party at a special political conference on Wednesday, while his late father was declared its "eternal" general secretary. The Korean Central News Agency reported that Kim Jong-un was named first secretary of the Workers' Party. Kim's promotion had been widely expected since he began taking his position as "supreme leader" of North Korea's people, party and military at the fourth full-team Party conference. The young Kim, who was unveiled as father Kim Jong-il's choice as successor at a party conference in September 2010, assumed power following the latter's death. AP

Baby alive after 12 hours in morgue

BUENOS AIRES—An Argentine woman who considered saving the premature lifeless body of her premature baby found the infant alive in the drawer of a hospital morgue, authorities say. The girl had spent 12 hours in the refrigerated room at the Provincial de Pediatria de Neuquen hospital in northern Argentina, Analia Graciela Rodriguez, the province's health minister, said. Rodriguez told reporters that the baby girl is now in good condition. The girl was born on April 2 after just six months of pregnancy, and the hospital issued a death certificate, saying she died of unknown causes, Rodriguez said. AP

Norway gunman found sane

OSLO—The Norwegian extremist who admits to killing 77 people in bombings and gun rampages on July 22 was sane at the time and is criminally responsible for his actions, state experts and his lawyer said on Tuesday. "We have concluded that the accused was and psychotic at the time of the crimes," psychiatrist Agnar Aspaas told reporters after he and his colleague Terje Toerrissen handed over their report to the court. Breivik's lawyer Geir Lippestad said the report contradicted an initial report team that found Anders Behring Breivik criminally insane. Six days before the opening of his trial in Oslo, the new assessment reopens the debate on whether the 33-year-old right-wing extremist should be jailed or treated at a mental psychiatric unit. On July 22, Breivik first set off a car bomb outside government buildings in Oslo, killing eight people. He then went to the island of Utoya and murdered 69 people dressed as a police officer and shot another 66. AFP

FedEx envelopes now carbon-neutral

SAN JOSE: FedEx Envelope, which is already made from 100 percent recycled content and is 100 percent recyclable, is getting another environmentally friendly boost. FedEx Express, an operating company of FedEx Corp. is launching a carbon-neutral shipping program for its most widely used packaging solution for document shipping, making it the first global express transportation company to offer carbon-neutral envelope shipping at no extra charge to customers. FedEx Express will make an investment in global projects that displace or sequester greenhouse gas emissions from the atmosphere, maintaining the organization's carbon emissions and balancing the shipment of all FedEx Envelopes around the world. "Our customers and the global climate will benefit from FedEx shipping documents in a way that neutralizes carbon emissions," said David Cunningham, president of FedEx Express, Asia Pacific.

133 dead in Qaida violence in Yemen

ADEN—At least 133 people were killed in 48 hours of clashes pitting Yemeni soldiers backed by tribesmen against al-Qaeda militants, officials said on Tuesday as the extremists vowed to retake a strategic town.

At least 124 people were killed in battles over the southern town of Loder in Abyan province, sparked when militants linked to al-Qaeda raided an Army barracks there on Monday.

"One hundred and twenty-four people were killed in two days" of clashes around the city of Loder which is besieged by al-Qaeda, said a military official.

The toll, which was confirmed by tribal sources, comprised 101 al-Qaeda militants—among them 12 Somalis and nine Saudis—and 23 soldiers and eight tribesmen fighting alongside the army.

Twenty-eight of the militants and two armed civilians were killed on Tuesday, while the conflict on Monday.

A government official in Loder said on Tuesday that al-Qaeda militants have surrounded the area in preparation for the complete takeover of the town.

"Al-Qaida has distributed statements throughout the town saying that it is determined to take control of Loder," said the official who requested anonymity.

Loder is located some 350 kilometers northeast of the Abyan provincial capital which the al-Qaeda-linked self-proclaimed Partisans of Sharia Islamic law militants overran in May last year.

Al-Qaeda briefly seized Loder in August 2010 before being driven out by the Army. AFP

IN THIS ISSUE
- Rise in infra spending seen to accelerate growth /B2
- A Brown unit taps SMC-Lavalin for power project /B2

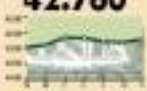
Editor Raul G. Marcelo ■ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano
BUSINESS

KINGATE SAFETY EYEWEAR

IT-BPO revenue reached $11B in 2011

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
April 11, 2012
42.760



STOCK MARKET
April 11, 2012
4.85

Share prices close lower

By Dara C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES generated $11 billion in revenue from the fast-growing information technology and business process outsourcing (IT-BPO) industry last year—24 percent higher than a year ago.

In a statement yesterday, the Business Processing Association of the Philippines (BPAP) also announced that the industry employed 630,000 by the end of 2011—22 percent more than that of the previous year.

"We hit the targets projected to our Road Map 2016," said new BPAP president Benedict Hernandez. "This is a good start as our five-year plan to grow at an average of 20 percent a year—above the projected global annual growth rate of 10-12 percent."

At a compounded annual growth rate of 20 percent, the Philippine IT-BPO sector is set to become a $25-billion industry by 2016, contributing about 9 percent to the Philippine economy and employing 1.3 percent of global demand, Hernandez added.

The biggest component came from voice outsourcing, which accounted for 65 percent of total business. The Contact Center Association of the Philippines (CCAP), also headed by Hernandez, reported that the sector raised 2011 with 436,000 employees providing $7.4 billion to services to the world. Already the largest contact center hub in the world, the Philippine sector grew by 21 percent in 2011.

Also, the Healthcare Information Management Outsourcing Association of the Philippines reported that as much as $237 million worth of HIMO services were provided to global end-users from the Philippines. The group reported that this segment employed 16,700 workers.

Another segment, Philippine Animation Industry Association, reported a 37-percent growth in revenue from IT outsourcing, while employment expanded by 11 percent to 4,013.

Another segment, the Game Developers Association of the Philippines, announced that the game development segment grew by 11 percent to 2013, with revenue reaching $8 million while employed workers topped 1,400.

Companies providing engineering services also saw a 5-percent increase in revenue and employment ending 2011, with over 5,000 employees providing $173 million worth of services.

This was the second consecutive year of positive growth for the segment after it saw a contraction in 2009, reflecting a recovery in global markets for construction and engineering design.

Also, the one-voice business process and knowledge process services grew by 24 percent in 2011 to over $2 billion in revenue. The segment employed a total of 130,000 by the end of the year.

Sector hit target, set to become $25-B industry by '16, says exec

PH joins Asean cellar dwellers, poll shows

By Konrad M. Domingo

MORNING owners in Southeast Asia consider the Philippines to be among the least developed and least attractive sites to do business in within the region.

Results of the 2011-2012 Asean Business Advisory Council (Abac) Survey on Asean Competitiveness showed that Vietnam had dislodged the Philippines from the group of five most attractive member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

The Philippines used to be part of what is called the Asean-5, or the nations considered to be the most attractive among business leaders in the region, which include Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore.

On the other end of the spectrum are those considered to be the less developed among Asean members—Cambodia, Laos, Burma (Myanmar) and even Brunei, which is rich in oil but has a small population.

The survey, conducted with the help of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National Uni-

PAGE 2

Power Situation Outlook
for Thursday, 12 April 2012

	8,973	1,864	1,198
	7,297	1,423	1,251
	1,786	381	-61

Rise in infra spending seen to accelerate growth

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE ASIAN Development Bank expects a spike in infrastructure investments in the Philippines over the next two years, saying this will help the economy bounce back to its potential growth rate after a slowdown last year.

Neeraj Jain, country director of the ADB for the Philippines, yesterday expressed confidence that projects lined up under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) program of the government would be ready for implementation starting this year.

Under the PPP program, private enterprises are invited to invest in key public infrastructure projects such as roads and airports.

"The government has reached the point where it can already implement sustainable projects," Jain said in a press conference conducted by the ADB's latest economic outlook on developing countries.

The ADB believes the government can deliver on its economic cause to fast-track the implementation of the projects now that it has completed the review of project proposals and that a system that can help prevent corruption-related leakage of funds is already in place.

ADB said in its latest report that it was keeping its economic growth forecast of 6.8 percent for the Philippines for this year, citing the likelihood that various infrastructure projects would be implemented.

The projection is in line with the 6- to 7-percent growth range—which economists said is actually the country's potential growth—that the Philippines had been hitting yearly for a decade until 2011.

Last year, the Philippines grew by only 3.7 percent, which many said was below its potential, partly due to under-spending by the government and delays in the implementation of infrastructure projects.

The country's economic managers claimed that PPP projects suffered from delays because of the review of the project proposals and the options for their implementation.

Besides an increase in infrastructure investments, growth in remittances backed household consumption, and portfolio investment of investors are also seen driving economic growth this year.

In the meantime, ADB senior economist Shiro Ural said in the same press conference that the Philippines should handle bottlenecks in its economic structure to be able to accelerate economic growth to the desired level of 7 to 8 percent.

Ural said the Philippines should attract more investments in the industry sector, especially in manufacturing, to be able to grow faster.

The ADB economist said while investments in the services sector had helped the country post decent growth rates of between 6 and 8 percent, investments in the industry sector would help speed up growth to 7 to 8 percent.

This is because the industry sector, compared with the services sector, is more capital intensive and provides more jobs.

A Brown unit taps SNC-Lavalin for power project

PALM Concepcion Power Corp. a subsidiary of listed A. Brown Co. Inc., has tapped SNC-Lavalin Inc., one of the leading engineering and construction groups in the world, to provide technical advisory services for its planned P30-billion, 300-megawatt coal-fired power plant on Panay Island.

In a statement, PalmConcepcion said SNC-Lavalin was appointed "owner's engineer" and would be tasked to provide technical advisory services from the engineering stage to the completion of the power generation project.

Its services will also cover detailed engineering, including review and evaluation of EPC (engineering, procurement and construction) specifications, operator's design parameters and operating features and development of conceptual layouts.

SNC-Lavalin has more than 100 years of experience in engineering, construction and operations. Its power group has been recognized internationally as a global leader in engineering and construction in the fields of hydrothermic, nuclear and thermal power generation, power system studies, power station trainers, transmission and distribution projects.

The planned 300-MW coal power plant in Panay is only the first phase of Palm Concepcion's power project. The target was to put up facilities that can generate a total of 2500 MW commencing of the first phase of the project is expected by the third quarter of 2015 and for the second phase, by November 2016.

The firm is tapping ISEC Capital to arrange the debt financing requirements, with financial closure expected by third quarter of the year.

Amy B. Barros

Phoenix jacks up capital to ₱2.5B

By Amy B. Barros

PHOENIX Petroleum Philippines Inc. has increased its capital stock to ₱2.55 billion from ₱900 million.

This represents 2.5 billion common shares and 50 million preferred shares, both have par value of ₱1 per share.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Phoenix Petroleum said its board had allowed its shareholder, Phoenix Petroleum Holdings Inc. (PPHI), to subscribe to 993 million common shares, which formed part of the additional capital.

"The subscription agreement provided that the settlement of the subscribed shares shall be completed by end of 2013 on a date mutually agreed by the parties and at a price computed based on a 30-day weighted average market price as traded on the PSE (Philippine Stock Exchange) preceding the agreed settlement date, but in no case lower than the par value," Phoenix Petroleum said.

The company was earlier allowed by its board to "conduct, do, perform and undertake capital and/or equity fund raising activities at the agreed terms or raising funds for future acquisitions or capital expenditures and operational requirements."

The fund raising activities included sale of preferred shares and issuances of bonds and corporate notes.

Phoenix Petroleum is currently embarking on its most aggressive retail network expansion program to date, which will see the construction of about 100 gas stations this year.

Phoenix Petroleum AVP Raymond E. Jorolla earlier said the company would spend about ₱500 million to put up 60 gas stations in Luzon, 20 in the Visayas and 40 in Mindanao this year. "This is to ensure that we continue as the leading independent player in the country in terms of both network size and market share," he said.

Atlas unit posts record sales, output

By Rose T. Cleofanchez

ATLAS Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. said its wholly-owned subsidiary, Carmen Copper Corp. for ₱30 million in sales in March and posted record production in the first quarter of 2013.

CCC produced 7.35 million pounds of payable copper in March 2013, with its first quarter copper output up by 21 percent from year-ago level, Atlas said.

"The surge in productivity enabled CCC to complete three shipments of copper concentrate to Chinese smelters within one calendar month and to earn a monthly revenue exceeding $30 million for the first time since the start of commercial operations in 2008," Atlas said.

"Clearly, the investments we made in 2011 are starting to pay off. Our operating staff are now over the moon as one of our $300-million bond offering, are giving us confidence to go ahead with our expansion projects over the next two years with the goal of optimizing operations by enhancing productivity and revaluing costs," Alfonso Fiamos, executive vice-president of Atlas, said in the statement.

Atlas is a diversified mining conglomerate in the Philippines. CCC, which operates the Toledo copper mine in Cebu province, is presently the largest exporter of copper concentrate.

Atlas earlier said CCC was funding mining expansion plans and paying loans with proceeds of a $300-million bond issue denominated in fixed rate notes to mature.

Atlas will conduct exploration works around CCC's mining area.

Atlas wants to increase CCC's milling capacity to 60,000 tons per day by 2013 from the present capacity of 40,000 tons per day.

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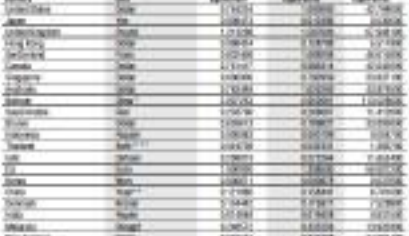

Share prices close lower

From page B1

index slumped larger losses even earlier in the day but all sectors still closed in negative territory as sales in Spanish borrowing rose while dovish comments in Europe.

Most turnovers narrowed to P3.71 billion, about half the average daily turnover seen in the first quarter.

There were only 44 advancers against 117 decliners while 39 stocks were unchanged. Bernice Pamolarco

PH joins Asean

From page B1

country of Singapore, seemed small, medium and large businesses. Almost all of the SME respondents are from the Philippines.

Based on the poll, only 27 percent plan to invest or increase investments in the Philippines over the next three years. This puts the country in sixth place, with Indonesia at the top, garnering 59 percent. Brunei is at the bottom with 17 percent.

According to the business leaders, the Philippines' biggest drawbacks are lack of infrastructure and the poor level of competitiveness...schools are, ironically, the main beneficiaries of the regime's education reforms.

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Three new groups have joined Maxicare's list of clients enjoying quality healthcare. The HMO leader has made it its mission to help all of its clients achieve peace of mind and ensure that they get the best health programs, medical options and treatments available.

Bureau of Immigration

On January 24, 2012, the Bureau of Immigration and Maxicare signed a contract that ushered in a new partnership and ensured that immigration officers and their dependents qualify healthcare. The BOI's vigilant administering of alien registration laws will be as strong as ever while Maxicare continues to provide quality healthcare to its members whenever or wherever they need it most.

Safeway Philtech Inc.

Safeway Philtech, in support to it and as integral component of Safeway Inc – a fortune 500 company and North America's second largest supermarket chain, recently signed a contract with Maxicare to provide cost-efficient and cost-effective healthcare to all of their employees and their dependents. The contract signing was held on February 23, 2012 at the Best Western Premier F1 Hotel in Bonifacio Global City. Safeway serve their clients 24/7 just as how Maxicare can be found anywhere at any time in the Philippines to provide quality care, thanks to its expansive network.

Republic Business Corporation (Rebisco)

From its humble beginnings as a small biscuit factory in San Juan, Rebisco has become a Filipino household name for generations, thanks to their wide variety of delicious snacks and treats. Rebisco sought Maxicare's cost-effective healthcare programs to be given to its employees. The two companies sealed their partnership on February 28, 2012 at Discovery Suites in Ortigas.

* Based on BusinessWorld's Top 1000 Corporations for 2010

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PUBLIC NOTICES

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Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF LA UNION
City of San Fernando

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO BID

The Provincial Government of La Union, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites qualified manufacturers / distributors / contractors to apply for eligibility and bid for the following project:

Name of Project : **CHD CU UNIT T-NCE RETROMATIC COMPONENT EXTRACTOR**

Location : La Union Medical Center, Agoo, La Union

Brief Description : Specifications:

- Voltage / Frequency: AC 220V/60Hz
- Fluid: 1 to 1.4P
- Size: 95.5 x 85.5 x 53 cm (D x W x H) or working conditions the weight is depending on the used model of the blood pump supplier (max 95.5 cm)
- Weight: 32 kgs
- Inlet Pressure: 4to 8KP
- High Pressure Connection: Output maximum 1.000.000 Hz Frequency 40.68 MHz crystal
- Accessories: Sanitary holder + support
- Communications: RS-232 for Remote mode RJ-45 for wireless Ethernet connection
- Compliance with European Directives: 93/42/EEC IEC 61010-1/IEC class II 2006/95/EC CSA C22.2 61010-1 safety

Approved Budget for the Contract : **P 1,500,000.00**
Contract Duration : 120 calendar days
Delivery Period : Mayo 2012

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years, with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project, for banking, electrical and personnel and equipment (various) subject of bidder purchased available for the proper conduct of the project. The list of minimum equipment requirement is indicated in the Eligibility Form. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Revised Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	April 10, 2012 (April 10, 2012, 8 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the BAC Office, Provincial Capitol, City of San Fernando, La Union)
2. Pre-Bid Conference	April 19, 2012, 10:00 a.m. Conference Room (second Flr), Provincial Capitol, City of San Fernando, La Union
3. Opening of Bids	April 26, 2012, 10:00 a.m. (Conference Room (second Flr), Provincial Capitol, City of San Fernando, La Union
4. Bid Evaluation	May 1, 2012
5. Post-qualification	May 3, 2012
6. Notice of Award	May 4, 2012

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of **P15,000.00** to the Provincial Treasurer's Cashier.

The Provincial Government of La Union assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **DR. GEOFFREY S. VILAR**
BAC Chairman

PDI – April 12, 2012

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Republic of the Philippines
BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites all interested suppliers to participate in the bidding for the following project/s:

Name of Project/Brief Description	Supply and Delivery of One Additional Lateral Filing Cabinets and BSP's Filmstrip Specifications 50 units – 5-drawer Lateral Filing Cabinet (F-1) 100 units – 4-drawer Lateral Filing Cabinet (F-2) 400 units – 4-Drawer Lateral Filing Cabinet (F-3)
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Not applicable
Delivery Period	21 – 45days, counting from 2012 calendar days after receipt of a copy of the executed contract. (F-1 and F-2 – 45days from the notice to proceed and date of delivery of F-3)

Bidders should have completed a similar requirement specified are completed from 4,000. For purpose processing of a Bank Bills of the ABC. For Eligibility Check Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, the Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Revised Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	Starting 10 April 2012 (from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and until 9:00 a.m. on 11 April 2012 only) Procurement Office Room 202, 2nd Floor, Five Bancor Building A. Mabini corner P. Ocampo Sts., Ermita Manila, Manila Tel. Nos. 708-7701 loc. 2202/2214
2. Pre-bid Conference	10 a.m. on 17 April 2012
3. Opening of Bids	10 a.m. on 24 April 2012
4. Bid Evaluation	Three months from receipt of bids
5. Post-qualification	Three months from receipt of bids
6. Notice of Award	21 days

The BSP and Republic of the Philippines for bidders may be disqualified from the opening of the Procurement Documents, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and the BSP Website (www.bsp.gov.ph). The complete set of the Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders from the address stated above upon presentation of the Cashier's Supplier's Order Form and payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of **P 10,000.00**.

Only bidders who have purchased the bidding documents shall be allowed to view or submit a bid as qualified participants.

The BSP reserves its responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The BSP reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to declare the bidding void at any time prior to the contract, to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidders. Furthermore, the BSP reserves the right to waive any minor defects or formality and to accept the proposal most advantageous to the agency.

(Sgd.) **ENRIQUE C. DOMINGO**
Chairman

BSPBAC-10-4(5)

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION OF SPACE CHIEF PHILS., INC.

Notice is hereby given that the Amended Articles of Incorporation of **SPACE CHIEF PHILS., INC.** showing the name of its corporate and thereby dissolving the Corporation as of 24 November 2006 and will be filed with the Securities & Exchange Commission. All parties having claims against the Corporation are requested to present the same at the 23rd Floor, Ayala Square, San Miguel Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City, within 10 days from receipt of this notice.

This announcement will serve as notice to all parties concerned of the legal dissolution of the Corporation.

Ortigas Center, 27 March 2012

(Sgd.) **MIRALUZ DAO**
Corporate Secretary

PDI – March 29, April 5 & 12, 2012

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DOLE-NCR Building, 2nd Floor
Intramuros, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permits:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Citizenship	Position
SANYO PHILIPPINES INC. 3/F Solid House Bldg., 2258 Don Chino Roces Ave. Ext., Makati City	Soichui Wang Chinese	Finance Manager
MITSUBISHI CORPORATION 14/F LV Locsin Bldg., 6752 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Yoshio Amano Japanese	General Manager
ROCKANADS TI (PHILIPPINES), INC. 2/F Centre 2, Valero Bldg., 109 Aguirre St., Legaspi Village, Makati City	Bradley Dale Harrison Australian	Country Director – Philippines
UNITOP GENERAL MERCHANDISE INC. 242 Sevilla St. cor. Jabonera St., Binondo, Manila	Chaoying Wang Chinese	Warehouse Supervisor
EASTWOOD PRESIDIO CORP. 10/22, Tower 3, Olympic Heights Condo Eastwood City, Quezon City	Kyoko Sano (wife of #38) Korean	Administrator
UNITOP GENERAL MERCHANDISE INC. 242 Sevilla St. cor. Jabonera St., Binondo, Manila	Jiming Wu Chinese	Store Owner/ Manager
UNITOP GENERAL MERCHANDISE INC. 242 Sevilla St. cor. Jabonera St., Binondo, Manila	Minghui Wang Chinese	District Manager
KEISEI PEOPLESUPPORT INC. Keisei People Support Center, Apollo Ave., Cor. SOTELO Ave., Subic Bay	Rahul Sharma Indian	Lead – Software Engineer
KELLY'S DREAM INC. 20 & 22, Crescent Park Residences, 30th St. Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City	Saori Kashiwagi Japanese	Japanese / Chinese Teacher
INTRAMICRO PH. INC. Suite 103 Rio Alphaland Bldg., C/O 3/F Asiaworks Condotel Inc., Subic Bay Freeport Zone	Jacqueline Lee Murdoch Australian	General Manager
PHILIPPINE TRAVEL FACTORY INC. Unit 1208 Antel Corporate Center, 121 Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Masato Shibata Japanese	General Manager
ZEON CHEMICAL PACIFIC LIMITED PHILIPPINE BRANCH 25/F 6750 Ayala Ave., Makati City	James Anthony Leach American	Senior Plant Engineering Manager
UNITOP GENERAL MERCHANDISE INC. 242 Sevilla St. cor. Jabonera St., Binondo, Manila	Shaojie Chen Chinese	Territory Manager
UNITOP GENERAL MERCHANDISE INC. 242 Sevilla St. cor. Jabonera St., Binondo, Manila	Changhuan Liang Chinese	Shipping Consultant

In the absence of Notice of Filing of Application for Alien Employment Permit published on March 15, 2012, the position of Mr. Alexander Arce of Avogadro Services LLC should have been read as Director for Operations and not as published.

If you have any information/data in the above-mentioned application, please communicate with the Regional Director.

ATTY. ALAN N. MEDINA, CESO III
Regional Director

PDI – April 12, 2012

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Founder and Legal Counsel,
RURAL BANK OF ALABAT, QUEZON (INC.)
Former Executive Vice-President,
PHILIPPINE VETERANS BANK

Died on Tuesday, April 10, 2012 and Now Interred at place in Heaven.

He is survived by his loving wife, Alida; children, LARRY and ANTI, EDEN and ISMEL, NENITA and ALEJO, EVELYN OUR and FRANK, DIVINES and EMMY, WILFREDO and MARY, DOMINDO, JR. and MELLETTE; 20 grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren, 1 brother, 5 sisters.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Project 8 Chapel, Marikina City.

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday – 10am at 7:00 PM

Saturday – 7:30 PM celebration of Tatay's life.

Interment will be held on Sunday, April 15, 2012 at 10:00 AM at the Loyola Memorial Park.

"Even when I walk through a dark valley I feel no harm. For you are at my side, your rod and staff give me courage."
Psalm 23:4

The Bishop and the Clergy of the Diocese of Alaminos and the Families of DEPOSAR and VILLANUEVA request the prayerful support for the eternal repose of the soul of

REV. MSGR. PEDRO VERASTIGUE URTOLA

Aged 80 years, Parish Priest of Sacred Heart Parish, Pozorrubio, Pangasinan

Died on Wednesday, April 11, 2012 at 4:45 A.M.

April 9, 2012, at the age of 80.

SCHEDULE OF RITES

April 12, 6 p.m. Bishop Rafael Nepa Lim (DMRS) Rufo Funeral Parlor, Lt. Cardinal Cathedral, Alaminos City (until 10:00a.m. of April 13)

April 13, 10 a.m. Funeral at St. Joseph Community Parish Church, Lt. Cardinal Cathedral, Alaminos City (until 6:00 P.M. of April 13)

April 13, 6 p.m. Cathedral of San Gregorio Magno, Alaminos, Pangasinan

April 14, 10 a.m. Funeral Mass, Interment at St. Joseph Memorial Park, Alaminos City

"Come and let us return to the Lord; for He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up."
– Hosea 6:1

OBITUARIES

"I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies, and whoever believes in Me will never die." – John 11:25-26

Our Beloved

Atty. MANUEL MANZANO MARAMBA

Died in the peace of the Lord on April 07, 2012 at the age of 72.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City until today, Thursday (April 12, 2012) and will be transferred to Marina St., San Antonio, Candon City, Ilocos Sur.

Interment will be on Wednesday, April 18, 2012 at the Paras Catholic Cemetery, Candon City, Ilocos Sur after the 8:00 a.m. Mass which will be officiated by Msgr. Jerry Avisa at the San Juan de Sahagun Parish Church.

His family is requesting for your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

MORE CLASSIFIEDS ON PAGE

PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR – A A20
PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR – B A20
PASIG RIVER REHABILITATION COMMISSION A20

International ICT Awards

Philippines 2012

Celebrating and investing in the remarkable rise of the Philippines as a global leader in the industry

Dapper in evening dress and suits, over five hundred delegates from the Philippines' top ICT companies filled the lobby in front of the Marriott Hotel's Grand Ballroom, chatting lightly over coolness and cocktails and sipping wine and champagne in crystal goblets.

This was the sparkling mood prevalent at the International ICT Awards Philippines 2012, which was co-presented by PLDT (UPHA Enterprise Establishment) 2007, the International ICT Awards – Philippines was designed to further propel the Philippines as the world's preferred provider of outsourced business and knowledge processes. Through these annual awards, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines and the Business Process Association Philippines (BPAP) aggressively promotes the Philippines as BPO Destination of Choice for Multinational Companies. In the spotlight are successes and examples within the ICT community including outstanding performance and contributions by organizations and individuals.

There was a definite glamorous Oscars-like flavor to the ICT Awards, complete up to the red-carpet in the Grand Ballroom. As the delegates were ushered into the Grand Ballroom with its unusually glass-dotted ceiling, the smooth tones of a live band provided the subdued soundtrack for the evening.

As the crowd filtered with the lights, the ballroom was revealed as a stunningly twilight world glowing in blue and violet, the large screens dominating the stage featuring the night's Master of Ceremonies, Bobby Allegre, who entered the room with a flare of James Bond music. After welcoming the audience, Mr. Allegre then called Mr. Alejandro Melchor to the stage for an introductory speech.

Mr. Melchor's speech included some very interesting figures, like how over the past year the Philippines had become the global #1 country for Voice (IPO and Business Support, and the clear global #2 for Healthcare Outsourcing. He also shared that the industry had so far enjoyed 24% revenue growth (from nine billion pesos in 2011) the previous fiscal year to eleven billion pesos) and that the industry was now aggressively pushing to develop the Philippines into a "world leader in multiple high-growth categories."

To the audience hitched their delicious dinners, Richard Mills, the founder of the ICT Awards, then began the Awards proper. "The process of – [entry] to global pre-eminence usually takes time – generations worth of hard work," he noted. "It took the Germans generations to develop their machinery industry, same for the Japanese automobile industry and the British with finance. The Americans are a bit different because they let a couple factoids let from event's. But the Philippines has done something remarkable. Six years ago they [each pushed the Philippines' chances in the BPO industry. How would a developing nation compete against the likes of India, they asked. Well, look at us today!"

On this optimistic note, Mr. Mills then invited the various presenters to announce the winners in each category, with Mr. Jose Hernandez of PLDT (UPHA Enterprise handing the night's final award of "BPO Company of the Year" to its executive.

The night ended with much rejoicing, cheering, and even raffle prizes. PLDT (UPHA Enterprise donated a brand-new iPad 2 for the raffle, which was won by Ms. Melba Hualinga from John Clements Consultants, Inc.

Winners

Best Mid-BPO Location of the Year: Tieto Corporation Services (Philippines) Inc.

Shared Services Excellence of the Year Award: HSBC Electronic Data Processing Philippines

Non-voice Excellence of the Year: IBM

Most Innovative Company: Alsersi Global Services Centre (Philippines) Ltd.

Fastest Growing BPO Company of the Year: Ingram Micro, Inc.

Quality Program of the Year: Hewlett-Packard Asia-Pacific (Hong Kong) Ltd. Phils. (ECIO)

BPO Employer of the Year: Convergys (Philippines) Services Corporation

BPO Company of the Year: Accenture in the Philippines

ICT Individual Contributors: Lilia de Lima (Secretary, Justice and Fulgido Peña)

My warmest greetings to the board, administration, and staff of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA), on the occasion of your 20th anniversary.

Twenty years ago, my mother, then President Corazon Aquino, signed into law Republic Act No. 7227 establishing the BCDA. Its creation set into motion the conversion of military reservations and idle government lands into productive developments for civilian use.

Through the years, BCDA has played an active role in the overall role of tourism-building generating revenues for the AFP modernization program and other government agencies, creating world-class cities in partnership with the private sector and foreign investors, and enabling countryside development through numerous road networks. In 2011 alone, you remitted P2.64 billion to the National Treasury. These achievements are testament to your critical role in advancing our country's economy and global competitiveness.

As you move towards your third decade, I count on your continued solidarity with our shared goal of sustainable growth and equitable progress. May you always be guided by the daylight values of transparency, accountability, and good governance, as we establish a culture of integrity and justice, where opportunities are abundant and every Filipino can reap the fruits of their hardwork. I wish you a happy and meaningful celebration.

BENIGNO S. AQUINO III
President
Republic of the Philippines

Republic of the Philippines
Office of the President

BCDA

Bases Conversion and Development Authority

BONIFACIO Global City

THE BCDA STORY:

From baselands to promiselands

THE MOST dramatic transformation of the Philippine landscape in the last 20 years occurred in the former sites of military bases. What used to be vast tracks of land where tanks freely rolled and roared; home to the defenders of our land, now stands towering buildings with state-of-the-art facilities; home to giant and small business ventures, entertainment and personal development enclaves.

SUBIC Clark-Tarlac Expressway

That virtually military-purpose-driven land only two decades ago—then known as Fort Bonifacio—is now Bonifacio Global City and is a showcase of a bustling metropolis. What is in and what is unsafe for today is about heritage preservation, changing landscapes and trees, learning lives—all undertaken by the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA), a government-owned and controlled corporation.

The present picture is far removed from the backdrop of devastation caused by nations which BCDA was born. Less than two years before it came into being, or to July 1990, a 7.8-magnitude earthquake toppled buildings and killed thousands in the North.

Less than a year later, in June 1991, Mt. Pinatubo in Pampanga, dormant for 500 years, erupted with great force, burying communities in mudflow and debris, killing hundreds, destroying crops and livelihood, spewing ashes that reached as far as other countries, and affecting global temperatures. Even the mighty US military forces, entrenched in these parts for nearly a hundred years, were forced to pull out months before the US-RP Military Bases Agreement would expire in September 1992.

It was in that period of misery and uncertainty that BCDA was tasked to transform and develop into productive centers the former US military bases and facilities to

"BCDA's achievements, however, cannot be measured alone in monetary terms. It has likewise triumphed in building communities and ushering in development for all"

BGC: A Play and Wellness Haven

The Color Me Chameleon sculpture at Terra 28th that allows you to change its colors on your own.

Terra 28th design and concept artists Rico and Chacha Lascano with their son and fabricator Mark (Bautista Gallmund) at their installation, "Musical Steps" – a public art that creates musical note sounds.

Kids can use the native game of piko at Terra 28th. The park has also areas for pahinis, holen, luksong baka, and bahalan-taya.

It's playtime! Terra 28th entertains children with its colorful playground set called "Rest and Play Mission" sculpture designed by artists Rico and Chacha Lascano.

The haven of passionate minds, Bonifacio Global City (BGC), is a nurturing community that supports its residents and visitors in achieving a balanced live-work-play lifestyle.

It has, in fact, devoted more than a third of its land to wide, landscaped parks and recreational areas so people would have opportunities to pursue their passion for play, fitness, and wellness. Nine in the list are Turf BGC, Terra 28th, North Pocket Park, and the soon to open Track 30th. Each park is tailored to meet the varying interests and passions of the people in the district.

Turf BGC is a public-accessible artificial turf football field. This sports ground uses the Mox 5 artificial turf made of hexagonal yarn, produced by Limonta, Italy—a FIFA Preferred Turf Producer. It is an all-weather playing field with surfaces that can be calibrated during windy conditions. Its lighting system is capable of producing required illumination for practice games, tournaments, and TV coverage.

89 years dabole and opens in the professional UFL can be seen practicing regularly in Turf BGC. Friday Night football games are also held for walk-in players, enthusiasts and teams who just want to kick it out with other members of the community. Turf BGC is also ideal for playing Futsal and Ultimate Frisbee.

Recently opened is the Terra 28th theme park for kids and families. It has wide gardens and walking paths that allow for safe running of kids, pet-walking, and picnics.

Terra 28th promotes local games of yesteryears by offering areas where kids can still play the outdoor games of patintero, holen, piko, luksong baka, and bahalan-taya.

This park also boasts of engaging art installations that young ones love playing around can enjoy. These installations were designed by Rico and Chacha Lascano and fabricated by Mark Bautista.

The centerpiece of Terra 28th is the 'Musical Steps,' a fixture of stainless steel tubes that creates musical note sounds every time one steps on the glass disc built in on the stairs' surface. The colorful 'Rest and Play Mission Sculpture'—a playground set composed of ribbon-shaped seesaws, swings, and monkey bars—invites the kids to run and.

There's also 'Color Me Chameleon'. The colors and glass panels can be crafted to change its skin color.

For those wanting of a quiet time amidst lush greens, North Pocket Park is the latest addition to BGC's parks. The Bonifacio Art Foundation Inc. has partnered with the late landscape artist Fronk Recio and sculptor Wilson Baldovino for this recreational area. The once plain slope at the corner of Bonifacio Avenue corner 11 Jungle Drive was transformed into a special place of tranquility. Still set in busy areas of the district, North Pocket Park is ideal for relaxing the mind and physical stretching.

The 'Lately-shaped' art installation named "Revival" by Baldovino signifies unbounded-ness, nature's perpetual rejuvenation, and totality of earth's evolution. Its jagging line is reflected appreciate-ingly helps in nurturing one's cautioned mind.

BGC is also set to open soon the Track 30th Riverpark. This park will have a meditation garden, exercise bars, and jogging path — perfect for people who want to have a healthy mind and body.

Also notable features of Track 30th are two functional art installations made of recycled materials. Using these Earth-friendly facilities promotes sustainable living — a way of preserving and nurturing nature.

Whether you want to work out, bond with your kids and family, or have some quiet me-time, you'll find a safe and quality place in BGC where you can indulge in play and wellness.

The Azkals hunted it out with UFL's Global Stallions in a friendly match at the opening of Turf BGC in Bonifacio Global City.

Turf BGC, a public accessible football field in Bonifacio Global City, was launched in February. Leading the ceremonial kick were (left to right) president of Phil. Football Federation Mariano Araneta, president of Fort Bonifacio Development Corp (FBDC) Antonino Aquino, president of BCDA and FBDC director Arnel Casanova, chairman of BCDA and FBDC's vice-chair Felicito Payumo, Taguig City Mayor Lani Cayetano, FBDC chairman Jose Campos, FBDC director Edgardo Cruz, and international consultant of Limonta Italo Jan Van Paraske.

The artist and his masterpiece. Wilson Wilson Baldovino poses with his grand artwork called "Revival", the art installation at North Pocket Park in BGC.

The colorful opening of Terra 28th was led by (from left) BGC's Henry Sitoy, Taguig City Government's Jorge Bocobo, FBDC's Hector De Jesus Campos Ed Cruz, Lou Rivera, and Kevin 28th's artist Rico Lascano.

From baselands to promiselands

From page B1-1

Clark Air Base to Sampaguita, Camp John Hay in Baguio, Wallace Air Station in La Union, and the former Philippine Refugee Processing Center (PRPC) in Morong, Bataan. BCDA was also expected to create opportunities for investment and employment in Central Luzon.

On March 12, 1992, President Corazon C. Aquino signed into law R.A. 7227 or the Bases Conversion and Development Act of 1992.

Despite the herculean task, the BCDA was expected to generate revenues internally. It was given either assets, such as the various former military camps in Metro Manila... including Fort Bonifacio and Villamor Air Base—for sale and disposition. Proceeds from the disposition of these assets will also finance the modernization program of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and provide funds to 11 other government agencies.

BCDA immediately buckled down to work, developing assets, entering into partnerships with private consortiums and real estate developers, and breaking ground for major projects to convert the abandoned lands into efficient world-class communities and to building sustainable cities and centers of economic growth.

GRATHCON4

CONVERGYS at Joyce Techno Hub, Camp John Hay

Where the money went

The emergence of BCDA as a preferred investment partner can be seen from the funds it has raised.

From May 1993 to February 2012, BCDA generated P52,977 billion from the sale of military facilities within Metro Manila. Of this amount, P33.830 billion was remitted to the National Treasury, some P11.786 billion went to the AFP, where P12.292 billion was allotted for its Modernization Program and P9.496 billion was allotted for the replication of military facilities. Similarly, P1.860 billion was remitted to the National Treasury for the country's National Shelter Program (NSP) that financed mass housing projects for the underprivileged and homeless citizens.

Linking people and business

BCDA's achievements, however, cannot be measured alone in monetary terms. It has likewise triumphed in building communities and achieving its development goals.

The former Clark Air Base has been transformed into what is now known as the Clark Freeport and Special Economic Zone (CFSEZ), hosting some 540 locators. Total investments have reached P130 billion and total exports hit P3.91 billion by end of 2013. From 20,000 people employed at the former US Clark Base, the CFSEZ has given new jobs to 64,055 Filipinos.

Up north, the Subic Bay Freeport Zone (SBFZ) in La Union is now home to 70-odd-developments—a five-star lifestyle-and-resort inspired hotel complemented by an entertainment area and a nine-hole golf course. Thousands of Filipinos, Koreans and Taiwanese, Inc. (TSMC) has poured P1.2 billion into this venture, a major chunk of the P1.57 billion investments in the SBFZ in 2011.

The San Fernando Airport, also located in the SBFZ, has been improved and plans are underway to upgrade it further in the near future. With the seaport and airport nearby, and infrastructures from each other, the BCDA envisions SBFZ to be the global gateway to the north.

Over in Bataan, the John Hay Special Economic Zone (JHSEZ) continues to be a premier tourist destination. The Panagbenga Festival, a tourist drawer in Baguio, was spearheaded by the BCDA and its subsidiary, John Hay Management Corporation (JHMC), in 1995.

Meanwhile, the former Philippine Refugee Processing Center (PRPC) in Morong, Bataan, a 10-minute drive from the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, is now the Bataan Technology Park.

A most notable accomplishment is the first-time, 94-kilometer Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX) running from Subic Bay in Zambales all the way to Tarlac. It was completed in record time of less than three years and started full operations on July 25, 2008. This expressway represents BCDA's policy shift from merely creating special economic zones within Clark and Subic to expanding their influence to the rest of the country. The SCTEX has become an efficient access to the Subic Bay Seaport and the Clark International Airport (CIA), reducing travel time from Clark to Subic to a mere 40 minutes and 25 minutes from Clark to Tarlac.

The airport in Clark, the seaport in Subic Bay and the SCTEX have created a portal by which Central Luzon can now trade directly with investor-laced markets without having to contend with the choking bottlenecks of Metro Manila. SCTEX made the construction of similar expressways viable. The 88-kilometer Tarlac-Pangasinan-La Union Expressway (TPLEX), a project of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), will connect the SCTEX all the way to La Union, providing seamless and speedy travel to motorists.

Modern cities

Who would ever think that the vast tract of land called Fort Bonifacio would someday transform into an upscale commercial-residential community? BCDA's partnership with the Fort Bonifacio Development Corporation (FBDC)—a consortium of top real estate developer Ayala Land, Inc. and the Campos-led Evergreen Holdings, Inc.—has made it possible to convert this area into the Bonifacio Global City, arguably the fastest growing and probably the most modern central

PAGE B2-1

BATAAN Technology Park Pavilion

THUNDERBIRD Resorts, Poro Point

ST. LUKE'S Medical Center, Bonifacio Global City

MEMORIAL: Shrine of Blessed Pope John Paul II on the Bataan Technology Park

GLOBAL Gateway Logistics City, Clark

NORTHRAIL project

H&D-Clark Steel Pipe Co., Inc

CLARK International Airport

From baselands to promiselands

From page B6

Business and Residential District in the country today.

Similarly, BCDA through a joint venture partnership with Megaworld Corporation, one of the fastest growing real estate development companies today, has completely changed the landscape of the once worry-out barracks of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) to the former Villamor Air Base into a high-end leisure and entertainment city called Newport City that features the world-class Resorts World Manila, Maxims Hotel and Marriott Hotel.

Collectively, the Bonifacio Global City and Newport City have already generated over 80,000 jobs and provided the local government units or LGUs with tax revenues that can help improve services for their respective constituents.

Moving forward

Twenty years later, the BCDA's development projects continue. Led by Chairman of the Board Felicito C. Payumo, President and CEO Aniel Paciano D. Custodio, and the members of the Board of Directors, the agency has set its sights on more innovative big-value projects to vigorously push the government's national development thrusts.

The key is to create different economic hubs in all BCDA areas that work in synergy through carefully master planned communities in Central and Northern Luzon such as Poro Point in La Union, John Hay in Baguio, Mariveles in Bataan, and Clark in Pampanga and Tarlac. These economic hubs will complement and strengthen each other and increase business, services, trade and investments.

Its centerpiece infrastructures consisting of the Clark International Airport, San Fernando Seaport and Seaport in La Union, and the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX) shall be further developed and harnessed to bring the greatest impact to the national economy. Likewise, the development of several railway systems, such as the monorail loop system to South Metro Manila, and the high-speed rail system connecting Metro Manila and Clark Freeport Special Economic Zone in Angeles, Pampanga shall be fast-tracked for the convenience of the public.

Ultimately, the BCDA areas are to become beacons of globally competitive and sustainable centers of economic activities that shall ripple and spread throughout their respective regions. Consequently, these economic hubs, taken together would serve as a tipping point for national economic development which is sustainable and inclusive.

At 20, BCDA is more determined and confident to build the country with projects expected to change landscapes and transform lives of Filipinos for the better.

As Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC) and its partners work towards a brighter future, it seizes new opportunities in connecting the lives of millions of Filipinos. By building better roads and improving expressway systems, families and loved ones are safely reunited, businesses and industries are stimulated, and the country is taken a step closer to a progressive future.

METRO PACIFIC TOLLWAYS

Bases conversion, in retrospect

By Felicito C. Payumo

IN COMMEMORATING the enactment of RA 7227 which created the Bases Conversion and Development Authority twenty years ago, we go back to "Rumbesteyes," a document which detailed in 1990 the list of alternative uses of military baselands in the event the government would not renew the RP-US Military Bases Agreement. "Rumbesteyes" was the output of the Legislative-Executive Bases Council, composed of eight lawmakers and eight undersecretaries from the executive branch. It was chaired by then University of the Philippines president Jose Abueva. The other members of the committee were then Senators Juan Ponce Enrile, Teofisto Guingona, Leticia Shahani, Ernesto Maceda and Congressmen Jose de Venecia, Jr. and me.

Reconvened in 1987, Congress in that time-lasted such gave issues as agrarian reform, ballooning foreign debt, and the expiration of the RP-US Military Bases Agreement in four years. I was assigned since the possible economic dislocations of southern inside those bases. As a party member of the workers in Subic naval base came from Bataan, particularly Dinalupihan, my hometown. Thus, I filed on August 5, 1987 House Resolution No. 189 which mandated various agencies to undertake a comprehensive study of alternative uses of the US military facilities in Clark and Subic and similar facilities in other locations.

Spark for national debate

Six months later, in February 1988, I delivered my maiden privilege speech decrying our lack of an alternative and comprehensive bases conversion plan should the US military bases force Subic and Clark and other military installations in the country. We were only a few years away from the expiry of the military bases pact and yet we were so unprepared. Whether or not we availed ourselves of the agreement, it was important that we had a credible plan for the alternative uses of the facilities in case we could negotiate from a position of strength. But without such plan, how could we even bargain for what we like or when the US knew that we could not walk away from the negotiating table? Worse, it would be the height of humiliation if we had to ask for US forces to stay in the country because we were not yet ready after shouting our "Yankees, go home" slogans. (Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew and other officials had to fly to London to request that the British forces stay longer, but these they were not as sheriff in their anti-British slogans.)

That same year, I delivered similar on the military bases that caused the formation of the Legislative-Executive Bases Council. The Council drew the road map for the future conversion.

Before "Rumbesteyes," there were already unofficial statements that Clark would make a good international airport and Subic a good seaport and that Subic could be utilized as a ship-building and ship repair facility or converted into a freeport like Hongkong. They were, however, nothing more than declarations of intent, or a wish list, and their constant repetition would not have made them happen. There was a variation of different proposals: simple statements of intention and an in-depth, well-researched study and plans anchored to a sound strategy, complete with timetable and detailed plans of action. A plan well-conceived was power itself – power to run side of the negotiating table.

Successful conversion stories

There were two conversion stories that we learned from. The Singapore bases was one. The Thai experience was another. A bases conversion program would not require us to "relocate the rebels," because the facilities inside the bases lands were not mined for when they were intended and used in the first place. The biggest American naval base located in Sattahip in Thailand was leased and run by the American President Lines for Seabees's use as container port with rail connections in Bangkok.

Our study of the Singapore story, on the other hand, inspired us in asking a functional approach to military bases pullout, given its economic and social, ty consequences. Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's then prime minister, while trying to squeeze the best concessions from the pullout, sought the immediate handing of Singapore's defense facilities as a result of the pullout, saying that he thought would lead to "serious renewal, highway construction, new industrial estates, reclamation and enhancements of private investments through loans, guarantees, and equity participation to advance investment and prop up the Singapore economy."

Mr. Lee created the Bases Economic Conversion Department, which was renamed "to negotiate with the British government on how to overcome the effects of the lockdown, to plan, allocate and develop the land and other assets including the conversion of facilities to civilian use, disposal, and leases and workshops for commercial use and the training of redundant workers."

"Rumbesteyes" prescribed the creation of a Philippine Baselands Development Authority, perhaps following the Singapore model. The proposed agency would implement, monitor and coordinate all aspects of the conversion program and ensure the people's participation in the program. That entity the precursor of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority.

Life after the bases

The organizational structure notwithstanding, Congress was already looking forward in a transition period after a military pullout, a transition "to the post-bases era or new life after the bases." As early as 1990, we were already talking of "definite phase-out provisions" culminating in a US turnover of military base lands to the Philippine government eight years later.

But fortunately or unfortunately, the phase-out and corresponding transition did not happen. On June 15, 1991, Mt. Pinatubo erupted and physically threatened the security of American forces inside Clark and Subic. On September 16, 1991, the Senate rejected the treaty that would have allowed the continued stay of American military bases in the Philippines. There were not only workers of the world-be pull-out of American bases; it also made the bases conversion plan more relevant. Interestingly, three of the twelve senators—then dubbed the magnificent twelve—who chanted down the bases treaty were top colleagues in the Legislative-Executive Bases Council: Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile who is now Senate President; former Senate President Jovito Salonga, the other seven Senators Joseph Estrada, Alejandro Tatad, Soc Rodrigo, Agapito Aquino, Ernesto Maceda, Teofisto Guingona, who also served as Vice President and concurrent Secretary of Foreign Affairs. Led by former Senate President Jovito Salonga, the others were

BCDA Board of Directors

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Director

Maximo L. Tangi
Director

The BCDA Group - catalyst for national development

From page B2-4

in landholdings, and legislative headlines to be truly the catalyst of national development by creating economic centers in Central and Northern Luzon.

Flowing forward the love pointers to city planning during the development of the Bonifacio Global City, it is now primed to build cities of the future within the country. BCDA is currently master-planning the new urban centers in Clark and Subic, Tarlac Point in San Fernando, La Union, John Hay in Baguio City, and the Fairview Technology Park in Morong, Rizal to replicate and maximize the development potential of these areas.

With ideal infrastructures, such as SCTEX, NLEX, Manila-Clark railway, and the Clark International Airport, providing connectivity and access to all these economic centers, their impact takes together can create the tipping point for national development.

BCDA development projects directly affect the lives of millions of Filipinos. The improvement of the economic condition of approximately a third of its population can give the Philippines its much-needed push towards the threshold of national development. Moreover, the growth of multiple economic centers connected will quality infrastructure and utilities can make the Philippines competitive in the global economy. Domestic and foreign tourists could easily go from one BCDA area to another. This would also spur progress in the countryside and areas outside Metro Manila.

The creation of other economic centers can ease Metro Manila's congestion. The quality of life in the capital is deteriorating because of overpopulation and urban sprawl with no semblance of planning or enforcement of zoning rules. The continued migration of people coming from the poor countryside aggravates this situation. Disaster-ravaged Manila, such as the one triggered by Typhoon Ondoy, changing weather patterns and pollution are along the heavily congested development of Metro Manila makes the creation of new cities within the next years not seem a choice but a necessity.

With BCDA's vision of connecting all its new landholdings and infrastructures together, the Philippines will witness the development of new sustainable urban centers throughout the country. In the next decades, we envision a new governance and leadership to rise in the area that's adjacent where the environment and modern technology will have to give the Filipinos an opportunity to live in a modern, beautiful, highly integrated, green and sustainable city. This will be the city of the future.

Up North, the Port Poro and Freeport Zone, with its airport and seaport, shall be the gateway for investments and tourism to the region. Together with Camp John Hay in Baguio, these two economic centers shall create a wave of economic opportunities in the surrounding provinces of Benguet and Ilocos Region.

The BCDA Group: leading a group for national development

Looming across the horizon of the past, BCDA recognizes that for development to be more inclusive, it requires synergy among all its subsidiaries and infrastructure projects must be institutionalized under a culture of transparency, integrity, and stewardship.

The basic investment programs into succeed its catalyst of national development if all BCDA subsidiaries would complement and harness the strengths of each other, mindful of the subtle to carry out in integrated, coordinated and well-planned effort to make each one globally competitive and yet hold on to the inherent features of foreign and local investments. Gone are the days of turf and competing mediums. We shall see, instead, a unified vision of economic drivers working as a team during the seven and nineties under the leadership of President Benigno S. Aquino III whose integrity in leading the country shines as the enduring legacy left by his mother.

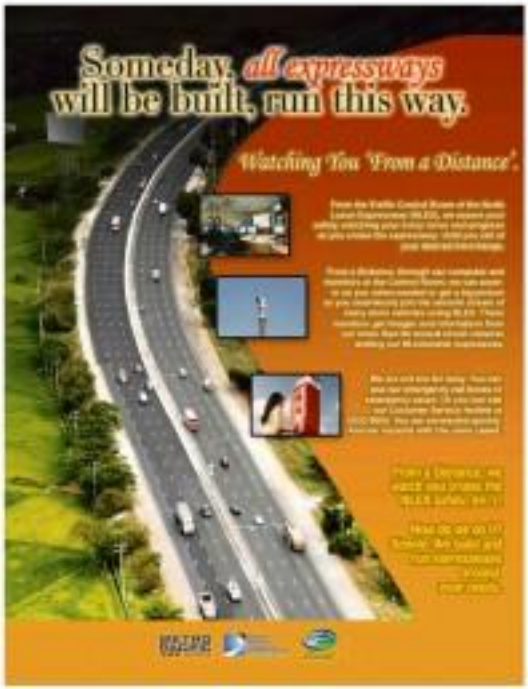
By focusing on its mission and energizing all its subsidiaries and assets together, the BCDA Group, as it will now be known, shall always serve as the catalyst and enabler for national development. Under the wonder of transparent, honest and competent leadership of President Aquino, the BCDA Group reminds itself in reinvigorating the trust and confidence of the global business community to the Philippines.

In the last 20 years, the BCDA group has blazed the trail in helping the Philippines see above the ashes. In the next 20 years, it shall continue to find new paths to help the country to global competitiveness and prosperity.

The past 20 years likewise saw the BCDA grow in full maturity. It has survived the vicissitudes and inconsistencies and kept up to the challenge of being in agent of change in waves of great urgency.

It has turned the physical infrastructure, the modern conveniences and amenities to her hosts. The BCDA has proved to the world that the Filipino spirit is unbreakable in the face of adversity. This proves further that if all of us, Filipinos—as a nation—will have faith in our own capacities and capabilities, we can achieve our aspirations and turn our pasts' dreams into reality.

With strong faith, courage and determination, we can firmly chart our destiny through a path of liberty and dignity.



Megaworld launches luxury address in new business district

Exclusive pop amenities also abound at One Uptown. There's a sky pool at the sixth level plus deck, sky gardens in four levels and a sky lounge at the 58th floor. On the same level are badminton/basketball courts which easily convert into multifunction areas for parties and other gatherings.

As for the 'open' components, the British and Japanese schools as well as International School Manila are all a few minutes away. This assures the family that the kids get nothing but the best education possible.

"With its excellent location in Northern Global City, plus easy access to any part of the metro via the new C-5 road, now is being considered. One Uptown Residence is a prime investment opportunity not to be missed," Fernandez said.

Units offered at One Uptown Residence include one-bedroom and two-bedroom suites. Choose from units that are oriented towards the north, east or west. Those who crave true exclusivity can do claim to any of the two true-bedroom suites at the penthouse floor.

Call Megaworld at 813-1888 for inquiries or visit the Uptown Mall showroom along Upper McKinley Road, McKinley Hill, Fort Bonifacio, to get a preview of the uptown lifestyle. You may also check out www.megaworldcorp.com for more information.

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at Uptown Bonifacio

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2013 ANUGO

MEGAWORLD

LIFESTYLE Food

2012 LIFESTYLE LIST

Best vegetarian dishes

Wild Rice Vegetarian Risotto

By Margie Braga-Reyes

VEGETARIAN FOOD—as our survey proves—has never been this good and varied, belying the notion that vegetarian dishes are bland and dull.

We searched far and wide and asked recommendations from vegetarian foodies/homecooks. Some dish or taste-almost close to the real thing, while others might take some time getting used to.

Here's our own list of vegetarian dishes that even meat eaters are truly savor and relish. We've also included vegan dishes prepared in a setogenic fashion (no eggs, no dairy products).

BACK C2

Wild Rice Vegetarian Risotto

Gumo-ami: A mix of Canadian wild (black) rice combined with brown rice and packed with vegetables that are predominantly shiitake and button mushrooms. An array of healthy stuff makes it more attractive and flavorful: celery, asparagus, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, leeks and cashews, among others. Chef extraordinaire Jessie Sincioco says the veggies are first sautéed in olive oil before adding them in the rice and baked. And, right before serving, she adds a dollop of butter to make the dish creamier and richer. "It's a totally different tasting experience with many textures playing in the mouth," Sincioco adds.

For vegans, the butter is replaced with olive oil. For non-vegetarians, either prawns or chicken cubes are added to the wild risotto.

Sincioco also serves other vegetarian food here, such as Baked Mushrooms in Phyllo, Hearty Vegetable Cutlets and Vegetable Strudel.

Cost: P195/small, P395/large. Available daily.

Commune: Chef Jessie Boulevard Club (chef Jessie Sincioco), G/L, Ayuntamiento Square, Bonifacio, Makati; tel. 9340743, 8567536, 4382396 and 09175 8867880

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How I went from 4XL to MEDIUM
WHAT WORKED. WHAT DIDN'T.

MY OVERWEIGHT DISAPPEARANCE LED ME TO CRASH DIET, A LOT...

Like many women out there, I was under the delusion that going on a strict diet was about the only way to lose excess pounds. I tried various fad diet plans and lost some weight, but every time I stopped, those pounds would come back fast – plus more than before. Gusto ko na sya tawag sa'kin, nag-gain pa ako. I realized it wasn't worth it. Crash diets just led to yo-yoing in my weight. Even the new fad diets that cost thousands for a program, in our days are basically the same as any other diet, so why would I pay for something I can simply find on Google?

HORMONAL INJECTIONS SOUNDED GOOD BUT...

I heard about these injections but they are coupled with a super restrictive diet of just 500 calories a day. If injections worked, why do I need the diet? Wise- wouldn't lose weight on only 500 calories a day – if you don't die of hunger in the process?! It didn't sound healthy. It worried me that I would have foreign hormones injected into my body, it's not natural, something bad could happen to my system. Mahirap na. Is it really worth the risk???

THEN A FRIEND RECOMMENDED MARIE FRANCE...

She told me how Marie France had slimmed her down, how easy and simple it had been. I was eager to give it a try. But I wondered if their system was just another program that subjected you to extreme diets. Fortunately I was wrong. Marie France simply helped me adopt sensible eating habits which led to a welcome lifestyle change. With their treatments and without having to follow a diet, I lost my excess weight! From a whopping 170 lbs, just look at me now – slimmer, healthier, and firmed up with no sagging skin. Most of all, I know the excess pounds won't come back!

Some people wrongly believe a Marie France program is expensive, actually it's only about equivalent to your annual gym membership. The difference is, with Marie France you'll get great results in less than 3 months – seeing those first pounds disappear in just a couple of weeks. And you get professional help and guidance from qualified nutritionists who counsel you on your food and drink choices, and doctors who monitor your progress ensuring you lose weight safely.

IT WORKS SO WELL, IT COMES WITH A MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE...

The Marie France slimming system is proven and is unique in that it comes with a Money-Back Guarantee – if you don't achieve your target weight loss and you've followed the simple program, you get money back. In fact, you're not getting to lose with Marie France except your excess fat! If Marie France were not totally confident their program worked, they wouldn't offer the money-back guarantee. With an offer like that, why would you choose any other alternative?

When it comes to losing weight, there's no such thing as magic or miracle. If you're not fully committed, you can't expect to get real results. Marie France worked for me because it offered a simple, scientific, reserved approach that a busy woman like me can adhere to. In just 25 minutes I could burn as much as 1,800 to 2,000 calories – that's equivalent to running for one and a half hours. I lost pounds and inches without feeling tired or hungry. It was perfect for me.

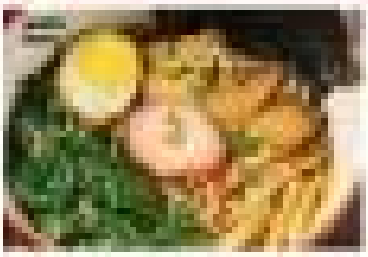
My 4XL body is now a thing of the past. Thanks to Marie France, I no longer worry that I'll be fat for life.

- Marybeth Chan
Businesswoman

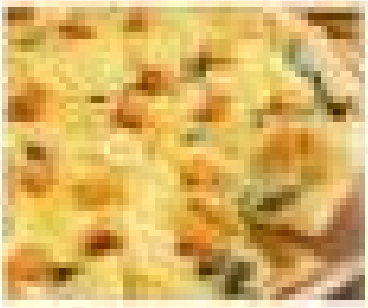
BEFORE 170 lbs

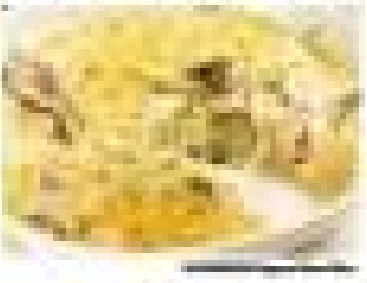
AFTER 136 lbs

For your free consultation and assessment call Marie France now at 894-2639.



Best vegetarian dish





ies

They're coated with olive oil and herbs, browned in skillet to caramelize the meat

PDI LIFESTYLE KITCHEN-TESTED RECIPE

Braised Lamb Chops

D.I.Y.

Yvonne Chiliaeva

AUSTRALIA IS sometimes referred to as the land down under, but I think it would be just as appropriate to call it the land of chocolate milk and honey. After all, Australia has a royal table and long-thriving dairy industry and it produces some of the world's best honey in territories like Tasmania and Kangaroo Island.

Whenever I'm in Australia, I always enjoy going to the markets and buying fresh fruits, vegetables and meats. One of the dishes I cooked recently while visiting my brother's house in Sydney is braised lamb chops, which I cooked with olive oil and herbs then browned in a skillet to caramelize the meat and the layer of fat around the sides.

I then cooked the lamb in the oven along with the drippings in the skillet. The results: Sooo everyone at the table! Yummy!

Here's the recipe for readers to try:

Herbed Braised Lamb Chops

Four to five servings

4-10 pcs lamb chops or lamb shoulder chops or lamb loin

Salt for seasoning

¼ cup/60 ml extra virgin olive oil, divided

½ c mixed herbs (rosemary, thyme, sage, oregano)

To serve: Mint sauce or mint jelly (store bought)

Preheat oven to 180°F (350°C). Season lamb on both sides with salt. Place about ½ c olive oil in a shallow dish. Dip each lamb chop in the olive oil then sprinkle both sides of the lamb with the mixed herbs.

Heat remaining olive oil in a skillet and brown the chops on both sides, around two to three minutes each side. If desired, brown also the fatty sides by standing each chop on its fatty side in the hot oil for several seconds. You may need a pair of kitchen tongs to hold the lamb chops upright.

Transfer the browned chops to a baking dish or roasting pan and pour in all the pan drippings. Cook in preheated oven for 10-15 minutes or until of desired doneness (medium rare, medium well, etc.)

Serve immediately, with mint sauce if desired.

Visit author's blog at: www.nutritionchiliaeva.com or fan page at: www.facebook.com/nutritionchiliaeva. Follow on Twitter @nutritionchiliaeva.

Cook's tips:

- The thicker the lamb chops, the longer they take to cook. Hence, for medium-well doneness, you may need to cook thick lamb chops a bit longer.
- For the herbs, you can also use Herbes de Provence, if available—a combination of various dried herbs that usually includes rosemary, thyme, sage, marjoram, parsley, tarragon and lavender.
- Use good-quality olive oil, preferably extra virgin olive oil.
- Mint sauce or mint jelly is available in bottles in big supermarkets and in specialty shops.

How to photograph food—and make the viewer's stomach growl

Top shutterbug Mark Florn shares his trade secrets

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

I HAD the chance to chat with esteemed food photographer Mark Florn after the pictorial he did for me of Satoshi's Chef Tanaka. I asked for food photography tips for someone like me, who owns a Canon G 12 point-and-shoot and wishes to use it more skillfully, to visually express the flavors that my palate captures. Here are some of his tips:

Is there a proper way to hold a camera?

Yes, there is a proper way. Hold it steadily. Use your hands, get the elbows closer to your body and get your feet and legs firm. Make your stance akin to a tripod.

At what setting are point-and-shoots set to?

Automatic

When should I use macro on the hood?

There is really a myth about macro. The main objective of a macro lens is to allow you to go very, very close, and when it is, you don't know what the food is. The best option is to get a lens that can go close enough, but not so much as to obscure the whole top of the food.

What is the most flattering color to photograph food on—by this I mean color of plates or plate?

There is a debate on this. It is nice to just keep the plate earth toned, white, or with very little or no design. You don't want the color of the plate to compete with the color of the food.

If I want to document my meal, where should I sit?

When it's handmade, right next to a window. Evening is a problem, because there is no more light coming through the window. Window lights are the most romantic—they're free and of the best quality.

What type of food is a food photographer's nightmare?

Food that is given to me looking ugly, and if my lighting is not working properly.

Is there food that is hard to photograph?

Yes, because of the food content. Like divagant, which is black, and the white pizza.

What is the easiest?

That is debatable, but for me, rice.

What do you enjoy shooting?

A dish that is beautiful, simply placed, and lit properly.

What captures your eye?

Since I have practically tasted and shot everything, perhaps something new or something I haven't tasted.

Are your quality-stocking photographs of food that look yummier than they actually taste?

I might not get work if I answer that! Unfortunately, I, too, am a victim to it. This has happened to me—ordering from a fast-food establishment and asking for exactly like what they have in a picture that says a dish has 10 pieces of meat, five slices of tomatoes... Then I am told, sorry, we do not have something like that, because that is only a photo.

How often do the photos you take turn as good as they look?

Seventy-to-80 percent.

If I had minimal light and did not want to use my point-and-shoot flash because it does not enhance the food, what would you recommend as the best camera setting?

Just pray that you have enough light to shoot with 400 ISO, and if you can shoot 1600th of a second, and at F4.

Let's talk about shooting heavy-ops—

Beverages I can talk about more than food. Shooting them is an art by itself, for instance, here in the US, there are barmen professional beer pourers or stylists who have perfected the art of pouring and pouring your beer for an ad or commercial shoot.

How about something that melts, can ice cream?

Lighting, camera, setting, everything must be ready to come you get it, bring it to where you have everything prepared, and shoot. Take pictures of it as soon as possible, otherwise, it starts to melt.

What's the essence of food photography?

To capture the role-image characteristic of food. To make my client's food shine and make your stomach growl. Hopefully, the photo-maker you create for the food. It should bring out positive sensations and emotions on the part of the viewer.

What are your thoughts on photo manipulation?

Yes we do as minimal of it as possible. I belong to the old school. I would rather use Photoshop my photos.

What is a good food photograph?

The one that comes out looking closest to the real thing.

What camera do you suggest a budding food photographer should buy?

Canon 1100 for point-and-shoot, and the one to 5. If we're talking SLR—Mid-zoom SLR....from I'm presuming the photos are to be used to sell a product, blog, etc., or a stage higher than Facebook. Other accessories would not an economical. Both—Canon 430x, and 60 pod.

Anything else you wish to share?

- Photography is light. It is not Photoshop, Lightroom, Aperture, or any other software that manipulates/edits digital images. Light establishes experience, conveys mood, makes viewers and stops the quality and direction of the light source(s). Notice the highlights and shadows. Do not be afraid of shadows.
- Know your camera. Identify and recognize each setting. Understand what ISO, aperture, and shutter mean. Read the camera's manual.
- If possible, use window light. Turn off the room's lights as they might/will influence the setup.
- Do not use the pop-up flash on your digital camera. It will always produce flat and unflattering food shots. Use an external flash if you can.
- When photographing your food item, shoot at different angles. Some foods look better at a higher angle, others at a lower angle. Shoot both horizontally and vertically.
- A good steady tripod and a cable release will be your best friends to eliminating camera movement.
- To all who like, please attend my food photography workshop at Philippine Center for Creative Imaging (PCCI, tel. 7393887/8922391, www.pcci.com.ph).

FOOD photographer Mark Florn

ENTERTAINMENT

Lira Soriano-G. Velarde

Cyndi Lauper reveals her true colors

NEW YORK—Cyndi Lauper swears her book will show her true colors. The award-winning singer-songwriter has a memoir coming out this fall, and a Books announcement Monday, Titled "Cyndi Lauper," the book will cover the quirky performer's story from a troubled childhood to superstardom in the 1980s to the "ups and downs" that followed, in a statement issued by Akita, the 58-year-old Lauper said: "Sometimes I come off good, sometimes not so good."

CHEER FACTOR

Foreign hunk duped by fake nymphet

By the Entertainment Staff

SURELY a cautionary tale for fun-bloated hunks cavorting the beach for sexy stunts this summer.

Foreign Hunk who had one drink too many caught the eye of Local Beauty in a popular Island destination.

They ended up in bed. To **Fil's** dismay, **LB** turned out to be a lady boy—a (transgender, to use the politically correct term).

Secret suitor

Secret Inquirer sees green hippie exposure than Dusty Stockplate-Ice reverse project.

A well-placed source said the project's Hardbee Director was smitten with H and tried to woo her but failed, as she was already committed to Handsome Actor.

Was this the reason that H4 ended up with broker reviews? Did HD stop taking care of H in the editing room?

Scrooged

There's nothing wrong with being frugal, but Hardbeeno Hunk could have cut a few thou because of his Scrooge-like behavior.

His dinner quit because of this. Poor man had a hard time making ends meet with his low salary.

HH also refuses to give his employees overtime pay (much less paid vacation).

Retain engagement

Controversial Bromantic finally called it quits with Unfaithful Lover.

When the dust settled, CP was able to make a few horrific calculations. For instance, she had given her boyfriend over ₱50 million worth of wristwatches.

GARFIELD BY JIM DAVIS

A LITTLE BY JEE ARORA

PUGAD BAABY BY PH. LAXMAN

DICK TRACY BY JOE STATON AND MIKE CLARK

LOVE-MOTS BY ELIZABETH HOROWITZ

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

ROAD MACHINE BY FRANK ABRAM

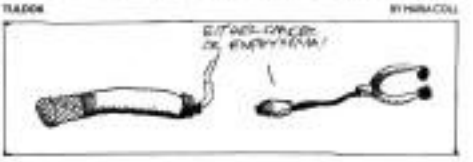
SEIN BY DANIEL SHELTON

NUTTS BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY

DUSTIN BY STEVE KELLEY AND JEFF PARKER

TOLES BY MARA COLL



HOROSCOPES

BY FRANCES DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY You're clever with words and are a clever speaker. You're determined and proud. You have a genuine interest in helping others. Your birthday are Aries (March 21 to April 19), Taurus (April 20 to May 20), Gemini (May 21 to June 20), Cancer (June 21 to July 22), Leo (July 23 to Aug. 22), Virgo (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22), Libra (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22), Scorpio (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21), Sagittarius (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21), Capricorn (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19), Aquarius (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18), Pisces (Feb. 19 to March 20).

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more puzzles and programs, go to www.sudoku.com

Concepts Sudoku — By Dave Green

			5		1			
		5				8		
	7		2		4		1	
4		6				3		7
				9				
7		8				5		6
	6		9		3		8	
		3				7		
			1		8			

Difficulty Level ★★★

Answer to previous puzzle

6	2	4	5	3	1	9	7	8
8	9	5	7	6	4	2	3	1
3	7	1	2	8	9	4	6	5
4	5	6	8	1	3	7	9	2
1	8	2	6	9	7	5	4	3
7	3	9	4	5	2	1	8	6
5	6	8	9	4	3	8	2	7
9	4	3	1	7	6	8	5	9
2	1	7	3	2	8	6	1	4

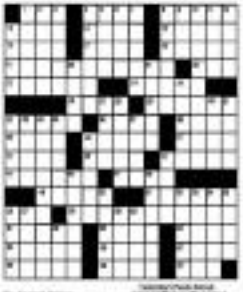
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Wings legend, for short
4 Ancient Peruvian people
10 Deli cut
13 Lamb's mom
15 Indian Ocean island nation
16 Hidden Valley Ranch ingredient
17 Capital of Bashan
18 Sweetheart
19 Summer camp
20 Fly
21 Have a stroke
22 Pitcher's stat
24 Pharmacist's org.
25 Cuban dictator Castro
26 Ancient Egyptian boat
28 Ancient Greek marketplace
30 Cheese coating
31 Tell on the parents
33 Sacramento, calif.
35 Exercise with spooky results
37 Hockey great Bobby
38 Museum in Nantes
39 Sweet amount
40 Sweet potato
41 Singer Lauper
42 Tell on a "better one"
43 Pleasant response
44 Winter precipitation
45 Wrap, as a present
47 Tiny, tiny
48 Big, bright star
49 Lyric poem
50 Pay (up)
52 Aunt Jemima
53 Cut, as cake
54 Part of the leg
55 Measurement
56 Ancient Semitic language
58 Hotel
59 Weapon's stock

DOWN

1 Ringlet
2 Bridge, e.g.
3 Hotel lobby
4 Mountain
5 Pleasing scents
6 Pitcher's delivery
7 Label information
8 Dodge
9 Anything
10 Ms. Ephron
11 Exercise
12 Bravado
14 Part of the pupil
15 Sacramento, calif.
23 Exercise with spooky results
25 Ancient Greek marketplace
27 Museum in Nantes
29 Sweet amount
31 Sweet potato
32 Singer Lauper
34 Sweet response
36 Winter precipitation
38 Wrap, as a present
40 Tiny, tiny
41 Big, bright star
42 Lyric poem
43 Pay (up)
45 Aunt Jemima
46 Cut, as cake
47 Part of the leg
48 Measurement
49 Ancient Semitic language
51 Hotel
52 Weapon's stock
53 Chaps and chaps
54 Beginner



Foreign...

From page D1

She wants the insanely expensive presents back pronto!

Pure fire

Yet another fan, the Hunk has been caught with his pants down.

El has apparently been in a secretive affair with a gay-themed movie, ironically as a straight guy.

In an alleged sex video, however, El cannot see as a submissive pup to an unruly aggressive partner. Who knew El was a versatile performer?

More scares

Entertainment Celebrity was accompanied by her mother on a high-profile event.

The mom seemed normal at first. Computer execs had a pleasant chat while her daughter was busy ogling the changed business cards.

Days later, GCN mom showed up unannounced at the usual office, looking dazed and confused. Then she started rambling incoherently shooting the execs thought of an excuse to sit down for "surprise" meeting.

Rejected

Hunky star sent an audition tape to the producers of a wildly popular TV show abroad.

The producers were unimpressed and He failed to make the grade. The show is said to have very high standards.

Not so lucky

Hunky Actor left his greener pastures over seas and also to find his long lost father, who's a foreigner.

YORDON DY

LOUISE de los Reyes Cinemaverdad

Lucky Chinatown
CINEMAS
1 Machine Gun Preacher
10:10am - 1:00pm
2:30pm
Battleship
6:10pm - 9:10pm
2 Hunger Games
9:10am - 11:50am
Titanic in 3D
2:30pm - 6:00pm
9:30pm
3 Battleship
9:00am - 11:30am
2:00pm - 4:30pm
7:00pm - 9:30pm
4 Moron 5 and the Crying Lady
11:50am
2:15pm - 4:30pm
6:55pm - 9:15pm

THE WORLD IS WATCHING AND ASKING...
"IS THAT A KISS?"
THE HUNGER GAMES
STILL THE #1 MOVIE IN AMERICA AFTER 3 CONSECUTIVE WEEKS!
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Foreign hunk...

Prev page/D3

Mr. apparently wasn't so lucky in either queue. He's back in town, his once-glorious looks gone and replaced by unwanted pounds.

Worse, he has yet to find his place in the sun. Rumor has it that MA balked in contempt the papers needed to make his stay abroad legal.

Overnight sensation

another Hunky four had a similar problem. He had to accept menial jobs in a first-world country. Frustrated, he came back and tried about his issues.

He hit the jackpot this time around. He became an overnight sensation and fulfilled his dreams, with a little push from several gay movies and benefactors, of course.

PHOTOS/D1

MOVIE TIME

GLORIETTA 2

1: WRATH OF THE TITANS
2: TITANIC (3D)
3: BATTLESHIP (3D)
4: THE MACHINE GUN PREACHER
5: THE HUNGER GAMES
6: BATTLESHIP
7: MORON 5 & THE CRYING LADY

GREENBELT 3

1: MORON 5 & THE CRYING LADY
2: WRATH OF THE TITANS

GREENBELT 5

1: WRATH OF THE TITANS
2: THE HUNGER GAMES
3: TITANIC (3D)
4: BATTLESHIP
5: BATTLESHIP (3D)

MARQUEE

1: BATTLESHIP (3D)
2: TITANIC (3D)
3: THE HUNGER GAMES
4: MORON 5 & THE CRYING LADY
5: WRATH OF THE TITANS
6: BATTLESHIP
7: MACHINE GUN PREACHER

ABREEZA

1: TITANIC (3D)
2: BATTLESHIP (3D)
3: MORON 5 & THE CRYING LADY
4: WRATH OF THE TITANS

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1: BATTLESHIP
2: BATTLESHIP (3D)
3: TITANIC (3D)
4: MORON 5 & THE CRYING LADY
5: WRATH OF THE TITANS

ARANETA CINEMA DIGI

1: BATTLESHIP (3D)
2: WRATH OF THE TITANS
3: TITANIC (3D)
4: MORON 5 & THE CRYING LADY

MARIKINA

1: WRATH OF THE TITANS
2: TITANIC (3D)
3: BATTLESHIP
4: MORON 5 & THE CRYING LADY

ARANETA MARKETT

1: BATTLESHIP (3D)
2: THE HUNGER GAMES
3: THE MACHINE GUN PREACHER
4: TITANIC (3D)
5: BATTLESHIP
6: MORON 5 & THE CRYING LADY
7: WRATH OF THE TITANS

ROBINSONS

1: MORON 5 & THE CRYING LADY
2: WRATH OF THE TITANS
3: TITANIC (3D)
4: BATTLESHIP (3D)
5: THE MACHINE GUN PREACHER
6: WRATH OF THE TITANS
7: BATTLESHIP

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6: WRATH OF THE TITANS
7: BATTLESHIP

ABREEZA

1: TITANIC (3D)
2: BATTLESHIP (3D)
3: MORON 5 & THE CRYING LADY
4: WRATH OF THE TITANS

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Foreign ...

from page D2

Making noise

A media insider that Swirnet Mar is making noise because of single-tawsiyah.

Hi, has lost a prime project, out on tenders. Worse, it is being engaged by Dreamwal actor in a high-profile project.

The two already had a falling out once. Now, a source says, Hi hopes to get back in Ms's good graces by hiding Controversial Celebrity whom Ms hates with fervor.

Top of the Talk Shows

For those who missed last week-end's TV gabfests (and why are we moved, if we are moved):

• Mela Constantino silver lure breakup with Aaron Pamatmat: "I'm very happy and complete, was rushed he na ang sarili ko ngayon ... Kaya kaya nagbag ang mukang ito sa [Talents Relief] ni pam." (Still clear. But, try not to say anything more.)

• Shamcey Supsup on keeping her love life private: "Without a camera in my private life, I'm a bit selfish. Yes we long ang nakitawag pareho kung masaki na ako long." (Think in your pants, girl.)

• Ai Ai de las Alas, asked how she stays friends with ex-husband Miguel Vera: "Ang sweet na man kami sa harap ng mga tao. Ayaw ko lang ng [unintelligible] ..." (Explosive.)

• Julia Prats, asked if he'll allow girlfriend Bianca Manalo to join "Pinoy Big Brother": "Do we have to? Ayaw ko lang ng [inside jokes sa harap ng...]" (Promises?)

• Jiz de Guzman, asked what she calls her "Angelito" leading lady Chance Peñaflo: "Princess." (Sweet girl.)

• Bishop Vera Perez del Pueblo on not having told Rod Ike her ex- tapped "Messenger" nakakatawa kasi ... di ko naman alam. I'mgin ko pa na sa ak Ako unday ang lang pa talaga." (Cover ano, nadi. Get now.)

• Carmina de los Reyes on rumors that her recent lobining spell in "Party Pilipinas" was due to ex-costars dieting: "Sa ang pagod lang pa talaga. From Party Pilipinas," may pinagdaanan pa akong taping ng 'My Beloved' siguro taping ng 'Sunday Pinjhas,' ako rin ang nagdidiet dati amin pa

(Cleffi Prats on Bianca Manalo: "I trust her.")

along mahirap na matinong diet na" (At least, medyo pag-iisipan ito.)

• Gretchen Barretto asked if Enzo Pineda was her boyfriend: "Kami si Enzo, close talaga si Jet's [sic], and we respect each other's company ... Pero sa tignan, ang tatlong gang kasi sa ang career namin ... Zoog kami indagat para si Jet's [sic, throwing the hand shirt at point to "Jun." Dahanan si Jet na nasaktan ang "just friends."]

• Hilarry Pacquiao on starting a new life: "Talagang tinuong na ako ng Panginoon para ...mmmm ... Kanyang kanin ... Tipuchthan kami.)

(Showbiz Central, The Buzz, with Allan Pedroso, contributor)

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MIRROR MIRROR 1:50 4:30 7:10 9:50
THE HUNGER GAMES 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
Grand Cinema National Awards Given
May 11 | Grand Ascenter Conference

MELAI Castillanes: Single and happy

Singing...

from page D4

ers, says Catriona to have look head check in the kitchen preparing all the delicious food.

I was also able to take in a couple of shows over the days—"Rock of" and "Believe," both of which I enjoyed. I'm not a musical "Buddies"—I would've been fun to see it.

The one were a little rough that evening, which made packing a bit of a challenge. But overall I was glad to have taken the course.

To the staff of the library Stories by Circle (originally over 250 of its Filipino members), thank you for making us feel so welcome and for taking such good care of us! We will definitely return with the rest of our family, and this time, we shall stay for the full week.

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Singing in high heels aboard a cruise ship

BACKSTORY

Leo Sulonga

I FOUND myself the recipient of an interesting invitation: the chance to sing the songs of composer Stephen Schwartz on the maiden voyage of the newest addition to the Disney Cruise Line's fleet of ships, the Disney Fantasy.

I wasn't really a big fan of cruises. A few years ago, Bob, Micole and I, plus members of Bob's family, took a senior citizens' cruise. The experience wasn't a lovely one, what with rude passengers, less than stellar food fare, and amenities and entertainment that were, shall we say, not quite up to par.

However, since it was Disney this time, I speculated a better experience.

I was working in the West Philippine Sea in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan when I got the call from Bobby Reyes, the artistic director of Music Museum, to see if I was available to sing with Julianne Manoeuvres and Juan Miguel Salvador in Bob Sings Schwartz, a concert celebrating the songs of Stephen Schwartz. I was in the middle of shooting a movie, but I was able to get a few days off to fly to Manila for the concert.

The concert would be an evening of his music, with a couple of my Disney songs thrown in.

Rehearsals began with Stephen augmenting us with some of his songs from "Pippin," "Wicked," "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" and "Prince of Egypt," among others. His wife Lisael then treated us to a rendition of "Let Just Be Me Time at All" from "Pippin."

Then it was my turn to have a run-through with "Colors of the Wind" ("Pocahontas"), "That's How You Know" ("Enchanted") and "Somebody" ("Hunchback of Notre Dame"), plus "Reflection" ("Mulan") and "A Whole New World" ("Aladdin").

Finally—and this was thrilling for me—I got to sing some lovely songs from "Defying Gravity" ("Both Sides Now" ("Wicked"). It was a version that I was used to singing in concert, one special-ly made for solo performances. We did one pass, and that was enough.

I couldn't help but talk about it on Twitter. Does it get better than to get to play Elphaba in "Wicked." I consider myself a very lucky lady to have sung the song with Stephen playing it.

Backstage thrill

The next day was a busy one. We did a 2:30 p.m. sound check, and then we had to be back at the theater for two performances—one at 6:15 and another at 8:30. I thought that I wouldn't be all that tuned up on my first try, but then high heels, but the nerves were calm. Whatever the captain did to keep things peaceful were assuredly worked!

After our first show, Disney Animation's head honcho John Lasseter and his wife Nancy were backstage to see us. Both were probably more thrilled than I was, and understandably so. John is one of the pioneers of Pixar, having directed "Toy Story," "A Bug's Life," and "Cars," among others, and served as executive producer on many more animated films. He is a very sweet man, and gave us generous hugs. According to Stephen, John is also a very gracious host to visitors of his when he's in Southern California.

Little vacation

It wasn't until the shows were done that we were able to enjoy a little vacation. We got off the ship at Castaway Cay for a little beach time. Inwell, the weather turned cool and windy, which prompted us to return onboard. We also wheeled down the Aqua Duck (a water slide on the ship), and watched "Finding Nemo" and the Bond" by the pool as my daughter swam and made new friends.

Bob and I were likewise able to participate in the amazing exhibit in Betty Crumbs after the lead character in the movie "Tinkerbell"). The dishes were sublime, and

ONGOING

Opening This Week

50 CENT in "Battleship"

Battleship

Directed by Peter Berg; stars Taylor Kitsch, Liam Neeson, Alexander Skarsgard, Rihanna, Brooklyn Decker, Tadanobu Asano.

Navy hunk (Kitsch) leads the planet's resistance against alien invaders. Screenrant.com reports that filmmaker James Cameron has criticized this action flick based on a Hasbro board game as "piss desperation." The opposite, however, Somethingawful.com informs: Universal spent "$200 million to make this movie ... at indications of Steven and Imagine" Rotten-Tomatoes.com calls it "a real pop corn flick." Opens today.

GERARD Butler in "Machine Gun Preacher"

Machine Gun Preacher

Directed by Marc Forster; stars Gerard Butler, Michelle Monaghan, Kathy Baker, Michael Shannon, Kyum Campos, Souleymane Sy Savane.

Former biker (Butler) moves to East Africa to save children who are being used as pawns in a civil war. The Hollywood Reporter's Kirk Honeycutt thinks a "stately balance the action and drama." Rotten Tomatoes's Meredith Brody describes it as "watchable, well-acted ... fitfully formulaic repetitive." Los Angeles Times' Betsy Sharkey points out: "Having such a complicated man as a central character is a blessing and a curse."